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ENQUIRY

INTO

The *modern* prevailing Notions

OF THAT

FREEDOM of WILL,

Which is ſuppoſed to be eſſential

TO

Moral Agency, *Vertue* and *Vice*, *Reward* and *Puniſhment*, *Praiſe* and *Blame*.

By JONATHAN EDWARDS, A.M.

Paſtor of the Church in *Stockbridge*.

Rom. ix. 16. *It is not of him that willeth*——

BOSTON, N. E.

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THE
PREFACE.

MANY find much Fault with the calling profeſſing Chriſtians, that differ one from another in ſome Matters of Opinion, by diſtinct *Names*; eſpecially calling them by the Names of particular Men, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves as Maintainers and Promoters of thoſe Opinions: as the calling ſome profeſſing Chriſtians *Arminians*, from *Arminius*; others *Arians*, from *Arius*; others *Socinians*, from *Socinus*, and the like. They think it unjuſt in it ſelf; as it ſeems to ſuppoſe and ſuggeſt, that the Perſons mark'd out by theſe Names, received thoſe Doctrines which they entertain, out of Regard *to*, and Reliance *on* thoſe Men after whom they are named; as tho' they made them their Rule: in the ſame Manner, as the Followers of CHRIST are called *Chriſtians*; after his Name, whom they regard & depend upon, as their great Head and Rule. Whereas, this is an unjuſt and groundleſs Imputation on thoſe that go under the forementioned Denominations. Thus (ſay they) there is not the leaſt Ground to ſuppoſe, that the chief Divines, who embrace the Scheme of Doctrine which is by many called *Arminianiſm*, believe it the more becauſe *Arminius* believed it: and that there is no Reaſon to think any other, than that they ſincerely and impartially ſtudy the holy Scriptures, and enquire after the Mind of Chriſt, with as much Judgment and Sincerity, as any of thoſe that call them by theſe Names; that they ſeek after Truth, and are not careful whether they think exactly as *Arminius* did; yea, that in ſome Things they actually differ from him. This Practice is alſo eſteemed

actually injurious on this Account, that it is supposed naturally to lead the Multitude to imagine the Difference between Persons thus named & others, to be greater than it is; yea, as tho' it were so great, that they must be as it were another Species of Beings. And they object against it as arising from an uncharitable, narrow, contracted Spirit; which, they say, commonly inclines Persons to confine all that is good to themselves and their own Party, and to make a wide Distinction between themselves and others, and stigmatize those that differ from them with odious Names. They say moreover, that the keeping up such a Distinction of Names has a direct Tendency to uphold Distance & Disaffection, and keep alive mutual Hatred among Christians, who ought all to be united in Friendship and Charity, however they can't in all Things think alike.

I confess, these Things are very plausible. And I will not deny, that there are some unhappy Consequences of this Distinction of Names, and that Men's Infirmities and evil Dispositions often make an ill Improvement of it. But yet I humbly conceive, these Objections are carried far beyond Reason. The Generality of Mankind are disposed enough, and a great Deal too much, to Uncharitableness, and to be censorious and bitter towards those that differ from them in religious Opinions: which evil Temper of Mind will take Occasion to exert it self, from many Things in themselves innocent, useful & necessary. But yet there is no Necessity to suppose, that the thus distinguishing Persons of different Opinions by different Names, arises mainly from an uncharitable Spirit. It may arise from the Disposition there is in Mankind (whom God has distinguished with an Ability and Inclination for Speech) to improve the Benefit of Language, in the proper Use and Design of Names, given to Things which they have often Occasion to speak of, or signify their Minds about; which is to enable them to express their Ideas with Ease and Expedition, without being incumber'd with an obscure and difficult Circumlocution. And the thus distinguishing Persons of different Opinions

in

in religious Matters, may not imply, nor infer any more than that there is a Difference, and that the Difference is such as we find we have often Occasion to take Notice of, and make Mention of. That which we have frequent Occasion to speak of (whatever it be, that gives the Occasion) this wants a Name: and 'tis always a Defect in Language, in such Cases, to be obliged to make use of a Description, instead of a Name. Thus we have often Occasion to speak of those who are the Descendants of the ancient Inhabitants of *France*, who were Subjects or Heads of the Government of that Land, and spake the Language peculiar to it; in Distinction from the Descendants of the Inhabitants of *Spain*, who belonged to that Community, and spake the Language of that Country. And therefore we find the great Need of distinct Names to signify these different Sorts of People, and the great Convenience of those distinguishing Words, *French*, and *Spaniards*; by which the Signification of our Minds is quick and easy, and our Speech is delivered from the Burden of a continual Reiteration of diffuse Descriptions, with which it must otherwise be embaras's'd.

That the Difference of the Opinions of those, who in their general Scheme of Divinity agree with these two noted Men, *Calvin*, and *Arminius*, is a Thing there is often Occasion to speak of, is what the Practice of the latter, it self confesses; who are often, in their Discourses and Writings, taking Notice of the supposed absurd and pernicious Opinions of the former Sort. And therefore the making Use of different Names in this Case can't reasonably be objected against, or condemned, as a Thing which must come from so bad a Cause as they assign. It is easy to be accounted for, without supposing it to arise from any other Source, than the Exigence and natural Tendency of the State of Things; considering the Faculty and Disposition God has given Mankind, to express Things which they have frequent Occasion to mention, by certain distinguishing Names. It is an Effect that is similar to what we see arise, in innumerable Cases which are parallel, where the Cause is not at all blame-worthy.

Nevertheless,

Nevertheleſs, at firſt I had Thoughts of carefully avoiding the Uſe of the Appellation, *Arminian*, in this Treatiſe. But I ſoon found I ſhould be put to great Difficulty by it; and that my Diſcourſe would be ſo incumber'd with an often repeated Circumlocution, inſtead of a Name, which would expreſs the Thing intended, as well and better, that I altered my Purpoſe. And therefore I muſt aſk the Excuſe of ſuch as are apt to be offended with Things of this Nature, that I have ſo freely uſed the Term *Arminian* in the following Diſcourſe. I profeſs it to be without any Deſign, to ſtigmatize Perſons of any Sort with a Name of Reproach, or at all to make them appear more odious. If when I had Occaſion to ſpeak of thoſe Divines who are commonly called by this Name, I had, inſtead of ſtyling them *Arminians*, called them *theſe Men*, as Dr. *Whitby* does *Calviniſtic* Divines; it probably would not have been taken any better, or tho't to ſhew a better Temper, or more good Manners. I have done as I would be done by, in this Matter. However the Term *Calviniſt* is in theſe Days, among moſt, a Term of greater Reproach than the Term *Arminian*; yet I ſhould not take it at all amiſs, to be called a *Calviniſt*, for Diſtinction's Sake: tho' I utterly diſclaim a Dependance on *Calvin*, or believing the Doctrines which I hold, becauſe he believed and taught them; and cannot juſtly be charged with believing in every Thing juſt as he taught.

But leſt I ſhould really be an Occaſion of Injury to ſome Perſons, I would here give Notice, that tho' I gerally ſpeak of that Doctrine, concerning Free-will and moral Agency, which I oppoſe, as an *Arminian* Doctrine; yet I would not be underſtood, that every Divine or Author whom I have Occaſion to mention as maintaining that Doctrine, was properly an *Arminian*, or one of that Sort which is commonly called by that Name. Some of them went far beyond the *Arminians*: And I would by no Means charge *Arminians* in general with all the corrupt Doctrine, which theſe maintain'd. Thus for Inſtance, it would be very injurious, if I ſhould rank *Arminian*

minian Divines in general, with such Authors as Mr. *Chubb*. I doubt not, many of them have some of his Doctrines in Abhorrence; tho' he agrees, for the most Part, with *Arminians*, in his Notion of the Freedom of the Will. And on the other Hand, tho' I suppose this Notion to be a leading Article in the *Arminian* Scheme, that which, if pursued in it's Consequences, will truly infer, or naturally lead to all the rest; yet I don't charge all that have held this Doctrine, with being *Arminians*. For whatever may be the Consequences of the Doctrine really, yet some that hold this Doctrine, may not own nor see these Consequences; and it would be unjust, in many Instances, to charge every Author with believing and maintaining all the real Consequences of his avowed Doctrines. And I desire it may be particularly noted, that tho' I have Occasion in the following Discourse, often to mention the Author of the Book entitled, *An Essay on the Freedom of the Will, in God & the Creature*, as holding that Notion of Freedom of Will, which I oppose; yet I don't mean to call him an *Arminian*: however in that Doctrine he agrees with *Arminians*, and departs from the current and general Opinion of *Calvinists*. If the Author of that Essay be the same as it is commonly ascribed to, he doubtless was not one that ought to bear that Name. But however good a Divine he was in many Respects, yet that particular *Arminian* Doctrine which he maintain'd, is never the better for being held by such an One: nor is there less Need of opposing it on that Account; but rather is there the more Need of it; as it will be likely to have the more pernicious Influence, for being taught by a Divine of his Name and Character; supposing the Doctrine to be wrong, and in it self to be of an ill Tendency.

I have Nothing further to say by Way of Preface; but only to bespeak the Reader's Candour, and calm Attention to what I have written. The Subject is of such Importance, as to *demand* Attention, and the most thorough Consideration. Of all Kinds of Knowlege that we can ever obtain, the Knowledge of God, and the Knowlege

Knowlege of our ſelves, are the moſt important. As Religion is the great Buſineſs, for which we are created, and on which our Happineſs depends; and as Religion conſiſts in an Intercourſe between our ſelves and our Maker; and ſo has it's Foundation in God's Nature and our's, and in the Relation that God and we ſtand in to each other; therefore a true Knowledge of both muſt be needful in Order to true Religion. But the Knowledge of our ſelves conſiſts chiefly in right Apprehenſions concerning thoſe two chief Faculties of our Nature, the *Underſtanding* and *Will*. Both are very important: yet the Science of the latter muſt be confeſs'd to be of greateſt Moment; in as much as all Vertue and Religion have their Seat more immediately in the Will, conſiſting more eſpecially in right Acts and Habits of this Faculty. And the grand Queſtion about the Freedom of the Will, is the main Point that belongs to the Science of the Will. Therefore I ſay, the Importance of this Subject greatly *demands* the Attention of Chriſtians, and eſpecially of Divines. But as to my Manner of handling the Subject, I will be far from preſuming to ſay, that it is ſuch as *demands* the Attention of the Reader to what I have written. I am ready to own, that in this Matter I depend on the Reader's *Courteſy*. But only thus far I may have ſome Colour for putting in a *Claim*; that if the Reader be diſpoſed to paſs his Cenſure on what I have written, I may be fully and patiently heard, and well attended to, before I am condemned. However, this is what I would humbly *aſk* of my Readers; together with the Prayers of all ſincere Lovers of Truth, that I may have much of that Spirit which Chriſt promiſed his Diſciples, which guides into all Truth; and that the bleſſed and powerful Influences of this Spirit would make Truth victorious in the World.

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PART I.

PART I.

Wherein are explained and ſtated various *Terms* and *Things* belonging to the Subject of the enſuing Diſcourſe.

SECTION I.

Concerning the Nature of the Will.

IT may poſſibly be thought, that there is no great Need of going about to define or deſcribe the *Will*; this Word being generally as well underſtood as any other Words we can uſe to explain it: And ſo perhaps it would be, had not Philoſophers, Metaphyſicians and Polemic Divines brought the Matter into Obſcurity by the Things they have ſaid of it. But ſince it is ſo, I think it may be of ſome Uſe, and will tend to the greater Clearneſs in the following Diſcourſe, to ſay a few Things concerning it.

And therefore I obſerve, that the *Will* (without any metaphyſical Refining) is plainly, *That by which the Mind chuſes any Thing*. The Faculty of the *Will* is that Faculty or Power or Principle of Mind by which it is capable of *chuſing*: An Act of the *Will* is the ſame as an Act of *Chuſing* or *Choice*.

If any think 'tis a more perfect Definition of the Will, to say, that it is that by which the Soul either *chuses* or *refuses*; I am content with it: tho' I think that 'tis enough to say, It's that by which the Soul chuses: For in every Act of Will whatsoever, the Mind chuses one Thing rather than another; it chuses something rather than the Contrary, or rather than the Want or Non-Existence of that Thing. So in every Act of Refusal, the Mind chuses the Absence of the Thing refused; The Positive and the Negative are set before the Mind for it's Choice, and it chuses the Negative; and the Mind's making it's Choice in that Case is properly the Act of the Will: The Will's determining between the two is a voluntary determining; but that is the same Thing as making a Choice. So that whatever Names we call the Act of the Will by, *Chusing*, *Refusing*, *Approving*, *Disapproving*, *Liking*, *Disliking*, *Embracing*, *Rejecting*, *Determining*, *Directing*, *Commanding*, *Forbidding*, *Inclining* or being *averse*, a *being pleased* or *displeas'd with*; all may be reduced to this of *Chusing*. For the Soul to act *voluntarily*, is evermore to act *electively*.

Mr. *Locke* * says, "The Will signifies Nothing but a Power "or Ability to *prefer* or *chuse*." And in the foregoing Page says, "The Word *Preferring* seems best to express the Act of Volition;" But adds, that "it does it not precisely; For (says he) "tho' a Man would prefer Flying to Walking, yet who "can say he ever wills it?" But the Instance he mentions don't prove that there is any Thing else in *Willing*, but meerly *Preferring*: For it should be considered what is the next and immediate Object of the Will, with respect to a Man's Walking, or any other external Action; which is not his being removed from one Place to another; on the Earth, or thro' the Air; these are remoter Objects of Preference; but such or such an immediate Exertion of himself. The Thing nextly chosen or prefer'd when a Man wills to walk, is not his being removed to such a Place where he would be, but such an Exertion and Motion of his Legs and Feet &c. in order to it. And his willing such an Alteration in his Body in the present Moment, is nothing else but his chusing or preferring such an Alteration in his Body at such a Moment, or his liking it better than the Forbearance of it. And God has so made and establish'd the human Nature, the Soul being united to a Body in proper State, that the Soul preferring or chusing such an immediate Exertion or Alteration of the Body, such an Alteration instantaneously follows. There is nothing else in

* Human Understanding. Edit. 7. Vol. I. P. 197.

in the Actings of my Mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or chusing, thro' successive Moments, that there should be such Alterations of my external Sensations and Motions; together with a concurring habitual Expectation that it will be so; having ever found by Experience, that on such an immediate Preference, such Sensations and Motions do actually instantaneously, & constantly arise. But it is not so in the Case of Flying: Tho' a Man may be said remotely to chuse or prefer Flying; yet he don't chuse or prefer, incline to or desire, under Circumstances in View, any immediate Exertion of the Members of his Body in order to it; because he has no Expectation that he should obtain the desired End by any such Exertion; and he don't prefer or incline to any bodily Exertion or Effort under this apprehended Circumstance, of it's being wholly in vain. So that if we carefully distinguish the proper Objects of the several Acts of the Will, it will not appear by this, and such-like Instances, that there is any Difference between *Volition* and *Preference*; or that a Man's chusing, liking best, or being best pleased with a Thing, are not the same with his willing that Thing; as they seem to be according to those general and more natural Notions of Men, according to which Language is formed. Thus an Act of the Will is commonly expres'd by *it's pleasing a Man* to do thus or thus; and a Man's doing as he *wills*, and doing as he *pleases*, are the same Thing in common Speech.

Mr. *Locke* says, † "The Will is perfectly distinguish'd from "Desire; which in the very same Action may have a quite "contrary Tendency from that which our Wills set us upon. "A Man (says he) whom I cannot deny, may oblige me to "use Perswasions to another, which, at the same Time I am "speaking, I may wish may not prevail on him. In this "Case 'tis plain the Will and Desire run counter." I don't suppose, that *Will* and *Desire* are Words of precisely the same Signification: *Will* seems to be a Word of a more general Signification, extending to Things present and absent. *Desire* respects something absent. I may prefer my present Situation and Posture, suppose sitting still, or having my Eyes open, and so may will it. But yet I can't think they are so entirely distinct, that they can ever be properly said to run counter. A Man never, in any Instance, wills any Thing contrary to his Desires, or desires any Thing contrary to his Will. The foremention'd Instance, which Mr. *Locke* produces, don't prove that he ever does. He may, on some Consideration or other, will to utter Speeches which have a Ten-

† Hum. Und. Vol. I. P. 203, 204.

dency to perſwade another, and ſtill may deſire that they may not perſwade him : But yet his Will and Deſire don't run counter at all : The Thing which he wills, the very ſame he deſires ; and he don't will a Thing, and deſire the contrary in any Particular. In this Inſtance, it is not carefully obſerved, what is the Thing will'd, and what is the Thing deſired : If it were, it would be found that Will and Deſire don't claſh in the leaſt. The Thing will'd on ſome Conſideration, is to utter ſuch Words ; and certainly, the ſame Conſideration ſo influences him, that he don't deſire the contrary ; all Things conſidered, he chuſes to utter ſuch Words, and don't deſire not to utter 'em. And ſo as to the Thing which Mr. *Locke* ſpeaks of as deſired, *viz.* that the Words, tho' They tend to perſwade, ſhould not be effectual to that End, his Will is not contrary to this ; he don't will that they ſhould be effectual, but rather wills that they ſhould not, as he deſires. In order to prove that the Will and Deſire may run counter, it ſhould be ſhown that they may be contrary one to the other in the ſame Thing, or with reſpect to the very ſame Object of Will or Deſire : But here the Objects are two ; and in each, taken by themſelves, the Will and Deſire agree. And 'tis no Wonder that they ſhould not agree in different Things, however little diſtinguiſhed they are in their Nature. The Will may not agree with the Will, nor Deſire agree with Deſire, in different Things. As in this very Inſtance which Mr. *Locke* mentions, a Perſon may, on ſome Conſideration, deſire to uſe Perſwaſions, and at the ſame Time may deſire they may not prevail ; But yet no Body will ſay, that *Deſire* runs counter to *Deſire* ; or that this proves that *Deſire* is perfectly a diſtinct Thing from *Deſire*.---- The like might be obſerved of the other Inſtance Mr. *Locke* produces, of a Man's deſiring to be eaſed of Pain &c.

But not to dwell any longer on this, whether *Deſire* and *Will*, and whether *Preference* and *Volition* be preciſely the ſame Things or no ; yet, I truſt it will be allowed by all, that in every Act of Will there is an Act of Choice ; that in every Volition there is a Preference, or a prevailing Inclination of the Soul, whereby the Soul, at that Inſtant, is out of a State of perfect Indifference, with reſpect to the direct Object of the Volition. So that in every Act, or going forth of the Will, there is ſome Preponderation of the Mind or Inclination, one Way rather than another ; and the Soul had rather *have* or *do* one Thing than another, or than not to have or do that Thing ; and that there, where there is abſolutely no preferring or chuſing, but a perfect continuing Equilibrium, there is no Volition.

SECTION

SECTION II.

Concerning the Determination *of the Will.*

BY *determining the Will*, if the Phraſe be uſed with any Meaning, muſt be intended, *cauſing that the Act of the Will or Choice ſhould be thus, and not otherwiſe:* And the Will is ſaid to be determined, when, in Conſequence of ſome Action, or Influence, its Choice is directed to, and fix'd upon a particular Object. As when we ſpeak of the Determination of Motion, we mean cauſing the Motion of the Body to be ſuch a Way, or in ſuch a Direction, rather than another.

To talk of the Determination of the Will, ſuppoſes an Effect, which muſt have a Cauſe. If the Will be determined, there is a Determiner. This muſt be ſuppoſed to be intended even by them that ſay, the Will determines itſelf. If it be ſo, the Will is both Determiner & determined; it is a Cauſe that acts and produces Effects upon it ſelf, and is the Object of its own Influence and Action.

With reſpect to that grand Enquiry, *What determines the Will*, it would be very tedious and unneceſſary at preſent to enumerate and examine all the various Opinions, which have been advanced concerning this Matter; nor is it needful that I ſhould enter into a particular Diſquiſition of all Points debated in Diſputes on that Queſtion, *Whether the Will always follows the laſt Dictate of the Underſtanding.* It is ſufficient to my preſent Purpoſe to ſay, --- *It is that Motive, which, as it ſtands in the View of the Mind, is the ſtrongeſt, that determines the Will:*--- But it may be neceſſary that I ſhould a little explain my Meaning in this.

By *Motive*, I mean the whole of that which moves, excites or invites the Mind to Volition, whether that be one Thing ſingly, or many Things conjunctly. Many particular Things may concur and unite their Strength to induce the Mind; and when it is ſo, all together are as it were one complex Motive. And when I ſpeak of the *ſtrongeſt Motive*, I have Reſpect to the Strength of the whole that operates to induce to a particular Act of Volition, whether that be the Strength of one Thing alone, or of many together.

Whatever is a Motive, in this Senſe, muſt be ſomething that is *extant in the View or Apprehenſion of the Underſtanding*, or perceiving Faculty. Nothing can induce or invite the Mind to will or act any Thing, any further than it is perceived, or is ſome Way or other in the Mind's view; for what is wholly unperceived, and perfectly out of the Mind's view, can't affect the Mind at all. 'Tis moſt evident, that nothing is in the Mind, or reaches it, or takes any Hold of it, any otherwiſe than as it is perceiv'd or tho't of.

And I think it muſt alſo be allowed by all, that every Thing that is properly called a Motive, Excitement or Inducement to a perceiving willing Agent, has ſome Sort and Degree of *Tendency*, or *Advantage* to move or excite the Will, previous to the Effect, or to the Act of the Will excited. This previous Tendency of the Motive is what I call *the Strength of the Motive.* That Motive which has a leſs Degree of previous Advantage or Tendency to move the Will, or that appears leſs inviting, as it ſtands in the View of the Mind, is what I call a *weaker Motive.* On the contrary, that which appears moſt inviting, and has, by what appears concerning it to the Underſtanding or Apprehenſion, the greateſt Degree of previous Tendency to excite and induce the Choice, is what I call the *ſtrongeſt Motive.* And in this Senſe, I ſuppoſe the Will is always determined by the ſtrongeſt Motive.

Things that exiſt in the View of the Mind, have their Strength, Tendency or Advantage to move or excite its Will, from many Things appertaining to the Nature and Circumſtances of the *Thing view'd*, the Nature and Circumſtances of the *Mind that views*, and the Degree & Manner of its *View*; which it would perhaps be hard to make a perfect Enumeration of. But ſo much I think may be determin'd in general, without Room for Controverſy, that whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent & voluntary Agent, which has the Nature and Influence of a Motive to Volition or Choice, is conſider'd or view'd *as good*; nor has it any Tendency to invite or engage the Election of the Soul in any further Degree than it appears ſuch. For to ſay otherwiſe, would be to ſay, that Things that appear have a Tendency by the Appearance they make, to engage the Mind to elect them, ſome other Way than by their appearing eligible to it; which is abſurd. And therefore it muſt be true, in ſome Senſe, that *the Will always is as the greateſt apparent Good is.* But only, for the right underſtanding of this, two Things muſt be well and diſtinctly obſerved.

1. It

1. It must be observed in what Sense I use the Term *Good*; namely, as of the same Import with *Agreable*. To appear *good* to the Mind, as I use the Phrase, is the same as to *appear agreable*, or *seem pleasing* to the Mind. Certainly, nothing appears inviting and eligible to the Mind, or tending to engage it's Inclination and Choice, considered as *evil* or *disagreable*; nor indeed, as *indifferent*, and neither agreable nor disagreable. But if it tends to draw the Inclination, and move the Will, it must be under the Notion of that which *suits* the Mind. And therefore that must have the greatest Tendency to attract and engage it, which, as it stands in the Mind's View, suits it best, and pleases it most; and in that Sense, is the greatest apparent Good: to say otherwise, is little, if any Thing, short of a direct and plain Contradiction.

The Word *Good*, in this Sense, includes in its Signification, the Removal or Avoiding of Evil, or of that which is disagreable & uneasy. 'Tis agreable and pleasing, to avoid what is disagreable and displeasing, and to have Uneasiness removed. So that here is included what Mr. *Locke* supposes determines the Will. For when he speaks of Uneasiness as determining the Will, he must be understood as supposing that the End or Aim which governs in the Volition or Act of Preference, is the Avoiding or Removal of that Uneasiness; and that is the same Thing as chusing and seeking what is more easy and agreable.

2. When I say, the Will is as the greatest apparent Good is, or (as I have explain'd it) that Volition has always for its Object the Thing which appears most agreable; it must be carefully observed, to avoid Confusion and needless Objection, that I speak of the *direct* and *immediate* Object of the Act of Volition; and not some Object that the Act of Will has not an immediate, but only an indirect and remote Respect to. Many Acts of Volition have some remote Relation to an Object, that is different from the Thing most immediately will'd and chosen. Thus, when a Drunkard has his Liquor before him, & he has to chuse whether to drink it, or no; the proper and immediate Objects, about which his present Volition is conversant, and between which his Choice now decides, are his own Acts, in drinking the Liquor, or letting it alone; and this will certainly be done according to what, in the present View of his Mind, taken in the whole of it, is most agreable to him. If he chuses or wills to drink it, and not to let it alone; then this Action, as it stands in the View of his Mind, with all that belongs to its Appearance there, is more agreable and pleasing than letting it alone.

But the Objects to which this Act of Volition may relate more remotely, and between which his Choice may determine more indirectly, are the present Pleasure the Man expects by drinking, and the future Misery which he judges will be the Consequence of it: He may judge that this future Misery, when it comes, will be more disagreable and unpleasant, than refraining from drinking now would be. But these two Things are not the proper Objects that the Act of Volition spoken of is nextly conversant about. For the Act of Will spoken of is concerning present Drinking or Forbearing to drink. If he wills to drink, then Drinking is the proper Object of the Act of his Will; and drinking, on some Account or other, now appears most agreable to him, & suits him best. If he chuses to refrain, then Refraining is the immediate Object of his Will, and is most pleasing to him. If in the Choice he makes in the Case, he prefers a present Pleasure to a future Advantage, which he judges will be greater when it comes; then a lesser present Pleasure appears more agreable to him than a greater Advantage at a Distance. If on the contrary a future Advantage is prefer'd, then that appears most agreable, and suits him best. And so still the present Volition is as the greatest apparent Good at present is.

I have rather chosen to express my self thus, *that the Will always is as the greatest apparent Good*, or *as what appears most agreable, is*, than to say that the Will *is determined by* the greatest apparent Good, or by what seems most agreable; because an appearing most agreable or pleasing to the Mind, and the Mind's preferring and chusing, seem hardly to be properly and perfectly distinct. If strict Propriety of Speech be insisted on, it may more properly be said, that the *voluntary Action* which is the immediate Consequence and Fruit of the Mind's Volition or Choice, is *determined* by that which appears most agreable, than the Preference or Choice it self; but that the Act of Volition it self is always determin'd by that in or about the Mind's View of the Object, which *causes it to appear* most agreable. I say, *in or about the Mind's View* of the Object, because what has Influence to render an Object in View agreable, is not only what appears *in* the Object view'd, but also *the Manner* of the View, and *the State and Circumstances* of the Mind that views.---Particularly to enumerate all Things pertaining to the Mind's View of the Objects of Volition, which have Influence in their appearing agreable to the Mind, would be a Matter of no small Difficulty, and might require a Treatise by it self, and is not necessary to my present Purpose. I shall therefore only mention some Things in general,

I. One

I. One Thing that makes an Object propoſed to Choice agreable, is the *apparent Nature* and *Circumſtances of the Object.* And there are various Things of this Sort, that have an Hand in rendring the Object more or leſs agreable; as,

1. That which appears in the Object, which renders it *beautiful* and pleaſant, or *deformed* and irkſom to the Mind; viewing it as it is *in it ſelf.*

2. The apparent Degree of Pleaſure or Trouble *attending* the Object, or the *Conſequence* of it. Such Concomitants and Conſequents being view'd as Circumſtances of the Object, are to be conſidered as belonging to it, and as it were Parts of it; as it ſtands in the Mind's View, as a propoſed Object of Choice.

3. The *apparent State* of the Pleaſure or Trouble that appears, with Reſpect to *Diſtance of Time*; being either nearer or farther off. 'Tis a Thing in it ſelf agreable to the Mind, to have Pleaſure ſpeedily; and diſagreable, to have it delayed: So that if there be two equal Degrees of Pleaſure ſet in the Mind's View, and all other Things are equal, but only one is beheld as near, and the other far off; the nearer will appear moſt agreable, and ſo will be choſen. Becauſe, tho' the Agreableneſs of the Objects be exactly equal, as view'd in Themſelves, yet not as view'd in their Circumſtances; one of them having the additional Agreableneſs of the Circumſtance of Nearneſs.

II. Another Thing that contributes to the Agreableneſs of an Object of Choice, as it ſtands in the Mind's View, is the *Manner of the View.* If the Object be ſomething which appears connected with future Pleaſure, not only will the Degree of apparent Pleaſure have Influence, but alſo the Manner of the View, eſpecially in two Reſpects.

1. With reſpect to the Degree of *Judgment*, or Firmneſs of *Aſſent*, with which the Mind judges the Pleaſure to be future. Becauſe it is more agreable to have a *certain* Happineſs, than an *uncertain* one; and a Pleaſure view'd as more probable, all other Things being equal, is more agreable to the Mind, than that which is view'd as leſs probable.

2. With reſpect to the Degree of the *Idea* of the future Pleaſure. With Regard to Things which are the Subject of our Thoughts, either paſt, preſent or future, we have much more of an Idea or Apprehenſion of ſome Things than others; that is, our Idea is much more clear, lively and ſtrong. Thus, the Ideas we have of ſenſible Things by immediate Senſation, are uſually much more lively than thoſe we have by meer Imagination, or by Contemplation of them when abſent.

ſent. My Idea of the Sun, when I look upon it, is more vivid, than when I only think of it. Our Idea of the ſweet Reliſh of a delicious Fruit is uſually ſtronger when we taſte it, than when we only imagine it. And ſometimes, the Ideas we have of Things by Contemplation, are much ſtronger & clearer, than at other Times. Thus, a Man at one Time has a much ſtronger Idea of the Pleaſure which is to be enjoyed in eating ſome Sort of Food that he loves, than at another. Now the Degree, or Strength of the Idea or Senſe that Men have of future Good or Evil, is one Thing that has great Influence on their Minds to excite Choice or Volition. When of two Kinds of future Pleaſure, which the Mind conſiders of, and are preſented for Choice, both are ſuppoſed exactly equal by the Judgment, and both equally certain, and all other Things are equal, but only one of them is what the Mind has a far more lively Senſe of, than of the other; this has the greateſt Advantage by far to affect and attract the Mind, and move the Will. 'Tis now more agreable to the Mind, to take the Pleaſure it has a ſtrong and lively Senſe of, than that which it has only a faint Idea of. The View of the former is attended with the ſtrongeſt Appetite, and the greateſt Uneaſineſs attends the Want of it; and 'tis agreable to the Mind, to have Uneaſineſs removed, and it's Appetite gratified. And if ſeveral future Enjoyments are preſented together, as Competitors for the Choice of the Mind, ſome of them judged to be greater, and others leſs; the Mind alſo having a greater Senſe and more lively Idea of the Good of ſome of them, and of others a leſs; and ſome are view'd as of greater Certainty or Probability than others; and thoſe Enjoyments that appear moſt agreable in one of theſe Reſpects, appears leaſt ſo in others: In this Caſe, all other Things being equal, the Agreableneſs of a propoſed Object of Choice will be in a Degree ſome Way compounded of the Degree of Good ſuppoſed by the Judgment, the Degree of apparent Probability or Certainty of that Good, and the Degree of the View or Senſe, or Livelineſs of the Idea the Mind has, of that Good; becauſe all together concur to conſtitute the Degree in which the Object appears at preſent agreable; and accordingly Volition will be determined.

I might further obſerve, the State of the Mind that views a propoſed Object of Choice, is another Thing that contributes to the Agreableneſs or Diſagreableneſs of that Object; the particular Temper which the Mind has by Nature, or that has been introduced and eſtabliſhed by Education, Example, Cuſtom, or ſome other Means; or the Frame

or

or State that the Mind is in on a particular Occasion. That Object which appears agreable to one, does not so to another. And the same Object don't always appear alike agreable to the same Person, at different Times. It is most agreable to some Men, to follow their Reason; and to others, to follow their Appetites: To some Men, it is more agreable to deny a vicious Inclination, than to gratify it; Others it suits best to gratify the vilest Appetites. 'Tis more disagreable to some Men than others, to counter-act a former Resolution. In these Respects, and many others which might be mention'd, different Things will be most agreable to different Persons; and not only so, but to the same Persons at different Times.

But possibly 'tis needless and improper, to mention the Frame and State of the Mind, as a distinct Ground of the Agreableness of Objects from the other two mentioned before; *viz.* The apparent Nature and Circumstances of the Objects view'd, and the Manner of the View: Perhaps if we strictly consider the Matter, the different Temper and State of the Mind makes no Alteration as to the Agreableness of Objects, any other Way, than as it makes the Objects themselves appear differently beautiful or deformed, having apparent Pleasure or Pain attending them; And as it occasions the Manner of the View to be different, causes the Idea of Beauty or Deformity, Pleasure or Uneasiness to be more or less lively.

However, I think so much is certain, that Volition, in no one Instance that can be mentioned, is otherwise than the greatest apparent Good is, in the Manner which has been explain'd. The Choice of the Mind never departs from that which, at that Time, and with Respect to the direct and immediate Objects of that Decision of the Mind, appears most agreable and pleasing, all Things considered. If the immediate Objects of the Will are a Man's own Actions, then those Actions which appear most agreable to him he wills. If it be now most agreable to him, all Things considered, to walk, then he now wills to walk. If it be now, upon the whole of what at present appears to him, most agreable to speak, then he chooses to speak: If it suits him best to keep Silence, then he chooses to keep Silence. There is scarcely a plainer and more universal Dictate of the Sense and Experience of Mankind, than that, when Men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what suits them best, or what is most *agreable to them.* To say, that they do what they please,

or

or what pleaſes them, but yet don't do what is *agreable* to them, is the ſame Thing as to ſay, they do what they pleaſe, but don't act their Pleaſure; and that is to ſay, that they do what they pleaſe, and yet don't do what they pleaſe.

It appears from theſe Things, that in ſome Senſe, *the Will always follows the laſt Dictate of the Underſtanding.* But then the *Underſtanding* muſt be taken in a large Senſe, as including the whole Faculty of Perception or Apprehenſion, and not meerly what is called *Reaſon* or *Judgment.* If by the Dictate of the Underſtanding is meant what Reaſon declares to be beſt or moſt for the Perſon's Happineſs, taking in the whole of his Duration, it is not true, that the Will always follows the laſt Dictate of the Underſtanding. Such a Dictate of Reaſon is quite a different Matter from Things appearing now moſt *agreable*; all Things being put together which pertain to the Mind's preſent Perceptions, Apprehenſions or Ideas, in any Reſpect. Altho' that Dictate of Reaſon, when it takes Place, is one Thing that is put into the Scales, and is to be conſidered as a Thing that has Concern in the compound Influence which moves & induces the Will; and is one Thing that is to be conſidered in eſtimating the Degree of that Appearance of Good which the Will always follows; either as having its Influence added to other Things, or ſubducted from them. When it concurs with other Things, then its Weight is added to them, as put into the ſame Scale; but when it is againſt them, it is as a Weight in the oppoſite Scale, where it reſiſts the Influence of other Things: yet it's Reſiſtance is often overcome by their greater Weight, and ſo the Act of the Will is determined in Oppoſition to it.

The Things which I have ſaid may, I hope, ſerve, in ſome Meaſure, to illuſtrate and confirm the Poſition I laid down in the Beginning of this Section, *viz.* That *the Will is always determined by the ſtrongeſt Motive*, or by that View of the Mind which has the greateſt Degree of *previous* Tendency to excite Volition. But whether I have been ſo happy as rightly to explain the Thing wherein conſiſts the Strength of Motives, or not, yet my failing in this will not overthrow the Poſition it ſelf; which carries much of its own Evidence with it, and is the Thing of chief Importance to the Purpoſe of the enſuing Diſcourſe: And the Truth of it, I hope, will appear with greater Clearneſs, before I have finiſhed what I have to ſay on the Subject of human Liberty.

SECT.

Section III.

Concerning the Meaning of the Terms Neceſſity, Impoſſibility, Inability, &c; *and of* Contingence.

THE Words *Neceſſary*, *Impoſſible* &c. are abundantly uſed in Controverſies about Free-will and moral Agency; and therefore the Senſe in which they are uſed, ſhould be clearly underſtood.

Here I might ſay, that a Thing is then ſaid to be *neceſſary*, when it muſt be, and cannot be otherwiſe. But this would not properly be a Definition of Neceſſity, or an Explanation of the Word, any more than if I explain'd the Word *muſt*, by there being a Neceſſity. The Words *muſt*, *can*, and *cannot*, need Explication as much as the Words *neceſſary*, and *impoſſible*; excepting that the former are Words that Children commonly uſe, and know ſomething of the Meaning of earlier than the latter.

The Word *neceſſary*, as uſed in common Speech, is a relative Term; and relates to ſome ſuppoſed Oppoſition made to the Exiſtence of the Thing ſpoken of, which is overcome, or proves in vain to hinder or alter it. That is neceſſary, in the original and proper Senſe of the Word, which is, or will be, notwithſtanding all ſuppoſable Oppoſition. To ſay, that a Thing is neceſſary, is the ſame Thing as to ſay, that it is impoſſible ſhould not be: But the Word *impoſſible* is manifeſtly a relative Term, and has Reference to ſuppoſed Power exerted to bring a Thing to paſs, which is inſufficient for the Effect; As the Word *unable* is relative, and has Relation to Ability or Endeavour which is inſufficient; and as the Word *Irreſiſtable* is relative, and has always Reference to Reſiſtance which is made, or may be made to ſome Force or Power tending to an Effect, and is inſufficient to withſtand the Power, or hinder the Effect. The common Notion of Neceſſity and Impoſſibility implies ſomething that fruſtrates Endeavour or Deſire.

Here

Here ſeveral Things are to be noted.

1. Things are ſaid to be neceſſary in *general*, which are or will be notwithſtanding any ſuppoſable Oppoſition *from us or others*, or from whatever Quarter. But Things are ſaid to be neceſſary *to us*, which are or will be notwithſtanding all Oppoſition ſuppoſable in the Caſe *from us*. The ſame may be obſerved of the Word *impoſſible*, and other ſuch like Terms.

2. Theſe Terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible* &c. do eſpecially belong to the Controverſy about Liberty and moral Agency, as uſed in the latter of the two Senſes now mention'd, *viz.* as neceſſary or impoſſible *to us*, and with Relation to any ſuppoſable Oppoſition or Endeavour *of ours*.

3. As the Word *Neceſſity*, in it's vulgar and common Uſe, is relative, and has always Reference to ſome ſuppoſable inſufficient Oppoſition; ſo when we ſpeak of any Thing as neceſſary *to us*, it is with Relation to ſome ſuppoſable Oppoſition of *our Wills*, or ſome voluntary Exertion or Effort of ours to the contrary. For we don't properly make Oppoſition to an Event, any otherwiſe than as we *voluntarily* oppoſe it. Things are ſaid to be what *muſt* be, or *neceſſarily* are, *as to us*, when they are, or will be, tho' we deſire or endeavour the contrary, or try to prevent or remove their Exiſtence: But ſuch Oppoſition of ours always either conſiſts in, or implies Oppoſition of our Wills.

'Tis manifeſt that all ſuchlike Words & Phraſes, as vulgarly uſed, are uſed and accepted in this Manner. A Thing is ſaid to be *neceſſary*, when we can't help it, let us do what we will. So any Thing is ſaid to be *impoſſible* to us, when we would do it, or would have it brought to paſs, and endeavour it; or at leaſt may be ſuppoſed to deſire and ſeek it; but all our Deſires and Endeavours are, or would be vain. And that is ſaid to be *irreſiſtible*, which overcomes all our Oppoſition, Reſiſtance, and Endeavour to the contrary. And we are to be ſaid *Unable* to do a Thing, when our ſuppoſable Deſires and Endeavours to do it are inſufficient.

We are accuſtomed, in the common Uſe of Language, to apply & underſtand theſe Phraſes in this Senſe: We grow up with ſuch a Habit; which by the daily Uſe of theſe Terms, in ſuch a Senſe, from our Childhood, becomes fix'd and ſettled; ſo that the Idea of a Relation to a ſuppoſed Will, Deſire and Endeavour of ours, is ſtrongly connected with

theſe

theſe Terms, and naturally excited in our Minds, whenever we hear the Words uſed. Such Ideas, and theſe Words, are ſo united and aſſociated, that they unavoidably go together; one ſuggeſts the other, and carries the other with it, and never can be ſeparated as long as we live. And if we uſe the Words, as Terms of Art, in another Senſe, yet, unleſs we are exceeding circumſpect and wary, we ſhall inſenſibly ſlide into the vulgar Uſe of them, and ſo apply the Words in a very inconſiſtent Manner: this habitual Connection of Ideas will deceive & confound us in our Reaſonings & Diſcourſes, wherein we pretend to uſe theſe Terms in that Manner, as Terms of Art.

4. It follows from what has been obſerved, that when theſe Terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*, *unable* &c. are uſed in Caſes wherein no Oppoſition, or inſufficient Will or Endeavour, is ſuppoſed, or can be ſuppoſed, but the very Nature of the ſuppoſed Caſe it ſelf excludes and denies any ſuch Oppoſition, Will or Endeavour; theſe Terms are then not uſed in their proper Signification, but quite beſide their Uſe in common Speech. The Reaſon is manifeſt; namely, that in ſuch Caſes, we can't uſe the Words with Reference to a ſuppoſable Oppoſition, Will or Endeavour. And therefore if any Man uſes theſe Terms in ſuch Caſes, he either uſes them nonſenſically, or in ſome new Senſe, diverſe from their original and proper Meaning. As for Inſtance; If a Man ſhould affirm after this Manner, That it is neceſſary for a Man, and what muſt be, that a Man ſhould chuſe Virtue rather than Vice, during the Time that he prefers Virtue to Vice; and that it is a Thing impoſſible and irreſiſtable, that it ſhould be otherwiſe than that he ſhould have this Choice, ſo long as this Choice continues; ſuch a Man would uſe theſe Terms *muſt*, *irreſiſtible* &c. with perfect Inſignificence and Nonſenſe, or in ſome new Senſe, diverſe from their common Uſe; which is with Reference, as has been obſerved, to ſuppoſable Oppoſition, Unwillingneſs and Reſiſtance; whereas, here, the very Suppoſition excludes and denies any ſuch Thing; for the Caſe ſuppoſed is that of being willing, and chuſing.

5. It appears from what has been ſaid, that theſe Terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible* &c. are often uſed by Philoſophers and Metaphyſicians in a Senſe quite diverſe from their common Uſe and original Signification: For they apply them to many Caſes in which no Oppoſition is ſuppoſed or ſuppoſable. Thus they uſe them with Reſpect to God's Exiſtence before the Creation of the World, when there was no other Being but He:

He: so with regard to many of the Dispositions and Acts of the divine Being, such as his loving Himself, his loving Righteousness, hating Sin &c. So they apply these Terms to many Cases of the Inclinations and Actions of created intelligent Beings, Angels and Men; wherein all Opposition of the Will is shut out and denied, in the very Supposition of the Case.

Metaphysical or *Philosophical* Necessity is nothing different from their Certainty. I speak not now of the Certainty of Knowledge, but the Certainty that is in Things themselves, which is the Foundation of the Certainty of the Knowledge of them; or that wherein lies the Ground of the Infallibility of the Proposition which affirms them.

What is sometimes given as the Definition of Philosophical Necessity, namely, *That by which a Thing cannot but be*, or *whereby it cannot be otherwise*, fails of being a proper Explanation of it, on two Accounts: *First*, the Words *Can*, or *Cannot*, need Explanation as much as the Word *Necessity*; and the former may as well be explained by the latter, as the latter by the former. Thus, if any one asked us what we mean, when we say, a Thing *cannot but be*, we might explain our selves by saying, we mean, it must necessarily be so; as well as explain Necessity, by saying, it is that by which a Thing cannot but be. And *Secondly*, this Definition is liable to the fore-mention'd great Inconvenience: The Words *cannot*, or *unable*, are properly relative, and have Relation to Power exerted, or that may be exerted, in order to the Thing spoken of; to which, as I have now observed, the Word *Necessity*, as used by Philosophers, has no Reference.

Philosophical Necessity is really Nothing else than the full and fix'd Connection between the Things signified by the Subject & Predicate of a Proposition, which affirms Something to be true. When there is such a Connection, then the Thing affirmed in the Proposition is necessary, in a Philosophical Sense; whether any Opposition, or contrary Effort be supposed, or supposable in the Case, or no. When the Subject and Predicate of the Proposition, which affirms the Existence of any Thing, either Substance, Quality, Act or Circumstance, have a full and certain Connection, then the Existence or Being of that Thing is said to be necessary in a metaphysical Sense. And in this Sense I use the Word *Necessity*, in the following Discourse, when I endeavour to prove *that Necessity is not inconsistent with Liberty*.

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The Subject and Predicate of a Propoſition, which affirms Exiſtence of Something, may have a full, fix'd, and certain Connection ſeveral Ways.

(1.) They may have a full and perfect Connection *in and of themſelves*; becauſe it may imply a Contradiction, or groſs Abſurdity, to ſuppoſe them not connected. Thus many Things are neceſſary in their own Nature. So the eternal Exiſtence of Being generally conſidered, is neceſſary *in it ſelf*: becauſe it would be in it ſelf the greateſt Abſurdity, to deny the Exiſtence of Being in general, or to ſay there was abſolute and univerſal Nothing; and is as it were the Sum of all Contradictions; as might be ſhewn, if this were a proper Place for it. So God's Infinity, and other Attributes are neceſſary. So it is neceſſary *in its own Nature*, that two and two ſhould be four; and it is neceſſary, that all right Lines drawn from the Center of a Circle to the Circumference ſhould be equal. It is neceſſary, fit and ſuitable, that Men ſhould do to others, as they would that they ſhould do to them. So innumerable Metaphyſical and Mathematical Truths are neceſſary *in Themſelves*; The Subject and Predicate of the Propoſition which affirms them, are perfectly connected *of themſelves*.

(2.) The Connection of the Subject and Predicate of a Propoſition, which affirms the Exiſtence of Something, may be fix'd and made certain, becauſe the Exiſtence of that Thing is already come to paſs; and either now is, or has been; and ſo has as it were made ſure of Exiſtence. And therefore, the Propoſition which affirms preſent and paſt Exiſtence of it, may by this Means be made certain, and neceſſarily and unalterably true; the paſt Event has fix'd and decided the Matter, as to it's Exiſtence; and has made it impoſſible but that Exiſtence ſhould be truly predicated of it. Thus the Exiſtence of whatever is already come to paſs, is now become neceſſary; 'tis become impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe than true, that ſuch a Thing has been.

(3.) The Subject and Predicate of a Propoſition which affirms Something to be, may have a real and certain Connection *conſequentially*; and ſo the Exiſtence of the Thing may be conſequentially neceſſary; as it may be ſurely and firmly connected with ſomething elſe, that is neceſſary in one of the former Reſpects. As it is either fully and thoroughly connected with that which is abſolutely neceſſary in its own

Nature, or with ſomething which has already received and made ſure of Exiſtence. This Neceſſity lies *in*, or may be explained *by* the Connection of two or more Propoſitions one with another. Things which are perfectly connected with other Things that are neceſſary, are neceſſary Themſelves, by a Neceſſity of Conſequence.

And here it may be obſerved, that all Things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be ſaid to be neceſſary, are neceſſary only in this laſt Way. Their Exiſtence is not neceſſary in it ſelf; for if ſo, they always would have exiſted. Nor is their Exiſtence become neceſſary by being made ſure, by being already come to paſs. Therefore, the only Way that any Thing that is to come to paſs hereafter, is or can be neceſſary, is by a Connection with ſomething that is neceſſary in it's own Nature, or ſomething that already is, or has been; ſo that the one being ſuppoſed, the other certainly follows. And this alſo is the only Way that all Things paſt, excepting thoſe which were from Eternity, could be neceſſary *before they came to paſs*, or could come to paſs neceſſarily; and therefore the only Way in which any Effect or Event, or any Thing whatſoever that ever has had, or will have a Beginning, has come into Being neceſſarily, or will hereafter neceſſarily exiſt. And therefore *this* is the Neceſſity which eſpecially belongs to Controverſies about the Acts of the Will.

It may be of ſome Uſe in theſe Controverſies, further to obſerve concerning *metaphyſical* Neceſſity, that (agreable to the Diſtinction before obſerved of Neceſſity, as *vulgarly* underſtood) Things that exiſt may be ſaid to be neceſſary, either with a *general* or *particular* Neceſſity. The Exiſtence of a Thing may be ſaid to be neceſſary with a *general* Neceſſity, when all Things whatſoever being conſidered, there is a Foundation for Certainty of their Exiſtence; or when in the moſt general and univerſal View of Things, the Subject and Predicate of the Propoſition, which affirms its Exiſtence, would appear with an infallible Connection.

An Event, or the Exiſtence of a Thing, may be ſaid to be neceſſary with a *particular* Neceſſity, or with Regard to a particular Perſon, Thing or Time, when Nothing that can be taken into Conſideration, in or about that Perſon, Thing or Time, alters the Caſe at all, as to the Certainty of that Event, or the Exiſtence of that Thing; or can be of any Account

Account at all, in determining the Infallibility of the Connection of the Subject and Predicate in the Propoſition which affirms the Exiſtence of the Thing; ſo that it is all one, as to that Perſon, or Thing, at leaſt, at that Time, as if the Exiſtence were neceſſary with a Neceſſity that is moſt *univerſal* and *abſolute*. Thus there are many Things that happen to particular Perſons, which they have no Hand in, and in the Exiſtence of which no Will of theirs has any Concern, at leaſt, at that Time; which, whether they are neceſſary or not, with Regard to Things in general, yet are neceſſary to them, and with Regard to any Volition of theirs at that Time; as they prevent all Acts of the Will about the Affair. --- I ſhall have Occaſion to apply this Obſervation to particular Inſtances in the following Diſcourſe.--Whether the ſame Things that are neceſſary with a *particular* Neceſſity, be *not* alſo neceſſary with a *general* Neceſſity, may be a Matter of future Conſideration. Let that be as it will, it alters not the Caſe, as to the Uſe of this Diſtinction of the Kinds of Neceſſity.

Theſe Things may be ſufficient for the explaining of the Terms *Neceſſary* and *Neceſſity*, as Terms of Art, and as often uſed by Metaphyſicians, and controverſial Writers in Divinity, in a Senſe diverſe from, and more extenſive than their original Meaning, in common Language, which was before explain'd.

What has been ſaid to ſhew the Meaning of the Terms *Neceſſary* and *Neceſſity*, may be ſufficient for the Explaining of the oppoſite Terms, *Impoſſible* and *Impoſſibility*. For there is no Difference, but only the latter are negative, and the former poſitive. *Impoſſibility* is the ſame as *negative Neceſſity*, or a Neceſſity that a Thing ſhould not be. And it is uſed as a Term of Art in a like Diverſity from the original and vulgar Meaning, with Neceſſity.

The ſame may be obſerved concerning the Words *Unable*, and *Inability*. It has been obſerved, that theſe Terms, in their original and common Uſe, have Relation to Will and Endeavour, as ſuppoſable in the Caſe, and as inſufficient for the bringing to paſs the Thing will'd and endeavoured. But as theſe Terms are often uſed by Philoſophers and Divines, eſpecially Writers on Controverſies about Free-Will, they are uſed in a quite different, and far more extenſive Senſe; and are applied to many Caſes wherein no Will or Endea-

vour for the bringing of the Thing to paſs, is or can be ſuppoſed, but is actually denied and excluded in the Nature of the Caſe.

As the Words *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *unable* &c. are uſed by polemic Writers, in a Senſe diverſe from their common Signification, the like has happen'd to the Term *Contingent*. Any Thing is ſaid to be contingent, or to come to paſs by Chance or Accident, in the original Meaning of ſuch Words, when its Connection with its Cauſes or Antecedents, according to the eſtabliſh'd Courſe of Things, is not diſcerned; and ſo is what we have no Means of the Foreſight of. And eſpecially is any Thing ſaid to be contingent or accidental with regard to us, when any Thing comes to paſs that we are concerned in, as Occaſions or Subjects, without our Foreknowledge, and beſide our Deſign and Scope.

But the Word *Contingent* is abundantly uſed in a very different Senſe; not for That whoſe Connection with the Series of Things we can't diſcern, ſo as to foreſee the Event; but for ſomething which has abſolutely no previous Ground or Reaſon, with which it's Exiſtence has any fix'd and certain Connection.

Section IV.

Of the Diſtinction of natural *and* moral Neceſſity, *and* Inability.

THAT Neceſſity which has been explain'd, conſiſting in an infallible Connection of the Things ſignified by the Subject and Predicate of a Propoſition, as intelligent Beings are the Subjects of it, is diſtinguiſh'd into *moral* and *natural* Neceſſity.

I ſhall not now ſtand to enquire whether this Diſtinction be a proper and perfect Diſtinction; but ſhall only explain how theſe two Sorts of Neceſſity are underſtood, as the Terms are ſometimes uſed, and as they are uſed in the following Diſcourſe.

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The Phraſe, *moral Neceſſity*, is uſed variouſly : ſometimes 'tis uſed for a Neceſſity of moral Obligation. So we ſay, a Man is under Neceſſity, when he is under Bonds of Duty and Conſcience, which he can't be diſcharged from. So the Word *Neceſſity* is often uſed for great Obligation in Point of Intereſt. Sometimes by moral Neceſſity is meant that apparent Connection of Things, which is the Ground of *moral Evidence* ; and ſo is diſtinguiſh'd from *abſolute Neceſſity*, or that ſure Connection of Things, that is a Foundation for *infallible Certainty*. In this Senſe, moral Neceſſity ſignifies much the ſame as that high Degree of Probability, which is ordinarily ſufficient to ſatisfy, and be relied upon by Mankind, in their Conduct and Behaviour in the World, as they would conſult their own Safety and Intereſt, and treat others properly as Members of Society. And ſometimes by moral Neceſſity is meant that Neceſſity of Connection & Conſequence, which ariſes from ſuch *moral Cauſes*, as the Strength of Inclination, or Motives, and the Connection which there is in many Caſes between theſe, and ſuch certain Volitions and Actions. And it is in this Senſe, that I uſe the Phraſe, *moral Neceſſity*, in the following Diſcourſe.

By *natural Neceſſity*, as applied to Men, I mean ſuch Neceſſity as Men are under through the Force of natural Cauſes ; as diſtinguiſh'd from what are called moral Cauſes, ſuch as Habits and Diſpoſitions of the Heart, and moral Motives and Inducements. Thus Men placed in certain Circumſtances, are the Subjects of particular Senſations by Neceſſity : They feel Pain when their Bodies are wounded ; they ſee the Objects preſented before them in a clear Light, when their Eyes are open'd : ſo they aſſent to the Truth of certain Propoſitions, as ſoon as the Terms are underſtood ; as that two and two make four, that black is not white, that two parallel Lines can never croſs one another : ſo by a natural Neceſſity Men's Bodies move downwards, when there is nothing to ſupport them.

But here ſeveral Things may be noted concerning theſe two Kinds of Neceſſity.

1. Moral Neceſſity may be as abſolute, as natural Neceſſity. That is, the Effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral Cauſe, as a naturally neceſſary Effect is with it's natural Cauſe. Whether the Will in every Caſe is neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt Motive, or whether the Will ever makes any Reſiſtance to ſuch a Motive, or can ever oppoſe the ſtrongeſt preſent Inclination, or not ; if that Matter ſhould be controverted, yet I ſuppoſe none will deny, but that, in

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ſome Caſes, a previous Bias and Inclination, or the Motive preſented, may be ſo powerful, that the Act of the Will may be certainly and indiſſolubly connected therewith. When Motives or previous Bias are very ſtrong, all will allow that there is ſome *Difficulty* in going againſt them. And if they were yet ſtronger, the Difficulty would be ſtill greater. And therefore, if more were ſtill added to their Strength, to a certain Degree, it would make the Difficulty ſo great, that it would be wholly *impoſſible* to ſurmount it; for this plain Reaſon, becauſe whatever Power Men may be ſuppoſed to have to ſurmount Difficulties, yet that Power is not infinite; and ſo goes not beyond certain Limits. If a Man can ſurmount ten Degrees of Difficulty of this Kind, with twenty Degrees of Strength, becauſe the Degrees of Strength are beyond the Degrees of Difficulty; yet if the Difficulty be increaſed to thirty, or an hundred, or a thouſand Degrees, and his Strength not alſo increaſed, his Strength will be wholly inſufficient to ſurmount the Difficulty. As therefore it muſt be allowed, that there may be ſuch a Thing as a *ſure* and *perfect* Connection between moral Cauſes and Effects; ſo this only is what I call by the Name of *moral Neceſſity*.

2. When I uſe this Diſtinction of *moral* and *natural Neceſſity*, I would not be underſtood to ſuppoſe, that if any Thing comes to paſs by the former Kind of Neceſſity, the *Nature* of Things is not concerned in it, as well as in the latter. I don't mean to determine, that when a *moral* Habit or Motive is ſo ſtrong, that the Act of the Will infallibly follows, this is not owing to the *Nature of Things*. But theſe are the Names that theſe two Kinds of Neceſſity have uſually been called by; and they muſt be diſtinguiſhed by ſome Names or other; for there is a Diſtinction or Difference between them, that is very important in its Conſequences. Which Difference does not lie ſo much in the Nature of the *Connection*, as in the two Terms *connected*. The Cauſe with which the Effect is connected, is of a particular Kind; *viz.* that which is of a moral Nature; either ſome previous habitual Diſpoſition, or ſome Motive exhibited to the Underſtanding. And the Effect is alſo of a particular Kind; being likewiſe of a moral Nature; conſiſting in ſome Inclination or Volition of the Soul, or voluntary Action.

I ſuppoſe, that Neceſſity which is called *natural*, in Diſtinction from *moral* Neceſſity, is ſo called, becauſe *meer Nature*, as the Word is vulgarly uſed, is concerned, without any Thing

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of *Choice*. The Word *Nature* is often uſed in Oppoſition to *Choice*; not becauſe Nature has indeed never any Hand in our Choice; But this probably comes to paſs by Means that we firſt get our Notion of Nature from that diſcernable and obvious Courſe of Events, which we obſerve in many Things that our Choice has no Concern in; and eſpecially in the material World; which, in very many Parts of it, we eaſily perceive to be in a ſettled Courſe; the ſtated Order and Manner of Succeſſion being very apparent. But where we don't readily diſcern the Rule and Connection, (tho' there be a Connection, according to an eſtabliſh'd Law, truly taking Place) we ſignify the Manner of Event by ſome other Name. Even in many Things which are ſeen in the material and inanimate World, which don't diſcernably and obviouſly come to paſs according to any ſettled Courſe, Men don't call the Manner of the Event by the Name of *Nature*, but by ſuch Names as *Accident*, *Chance*, *Contingence* &c. So Men make a Diſtinction between Nature and Choice; as tho' they were compleatly and univerſally diſtinct. Whereas, I ſuppoſe none will deny but that Choice, *in many Caſes*, ariſes from Nature, as truly as other Events. But the Dependance & Connection between Acts of Volition or Choice, and their Cauſes, according to eſtabliſhed Laws, is not ſo ſenſible and obvious. And we obſerve that Choice is as it were a new Principle of Motion and Action, different from that eſtabliſh'd Law & Order of Things which is moſt obvious, that is ſeen eſpecially in corporeal and ſenſible Things; And alſo that Choice often interpoſes, interrupts and alters the Chain of Events in theſe external Objects, and cauſes 'em to proceed otherwiſe than they would do, if let alone, and left to go on according to the Laws of Motion among themſelves. Hence it is ſpoken of, as if it were a Principle of Motion entirely diſtinct from Nature, and properly ſet in Oppoſition to it. Names being commonly given to Things, according to what is moſt obvious, and is ſuggeſted by what appears to the Senſes without Reflection & Reſearch.

3. It muſt be obſerved, that in what has been explain'd, as ſignified by the Name of *Moral Neceſſity*, the Word *Neceſſity* is not uſed according to the original Deſign and Meaning of the Word: For, as was obſerved before, ſuch Terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible* &c. in common Speech, and their moſt proper Senſe, are always relative; having Reference to ſome ſuppoſable voluntary Oppoſition or Endeavour, that is inſufficient. But no ſuch Oppoſition, or contrary Will and Endeavour, is ſuppoſable in the Caſe of moral Neceſſity; which is a Certainty

tainty of the Inclination and Will it self; which does not admit of the Supposition of a Will to oppose and resist it. For 'tis absurd, to suppose the same individual Will to oppose it self, in its present Act; or the present Choice to be opposite to, and resisting present Choice: as absurd as it is to talk of two contrary Motions, in the same moving Body, at the same Time. And therefore the very Case supposed never admits of any Trial, whether an opposing or resisting Will can overcome this Necessity.

What has been said of natural and moral Necessity, may serve to explain what is intended by natural and moral *Inability*. We are said to be *naturally* unable to do a Thing, when we can't do it if we will, because what is most commonly called *Nature* don't allow of it, or because of some impeding Defect or Obstacle that is extrinsic to the Will; either in the Faculty of Understanding, Constitution of Body, or external Objects. *Moral* Inability consists not in any of these Things; but either in the Want of Inclination; or the Strength of a contrary Inclination; or the want of sufficient Motives in View, to induce and excite the Act of the Will, or the Strength of apparent Motives to the contrary. Or both these may be resolved into one; and it may be said in one Word, that moral Inability consists in the Opposition or Want of Inclination. For when a Person is unable to will or chuse such a Thing, through a Defect of Motives, or Prevalence of contrary Motives, 'tis the same Thing as his being unable through the Want of an Inclination, or the Prevalence of a contrary Inclination, in such Circumstances, and under the Influence of such Views.

To give some Instances of this *moral Inability*.----A Woman of great Honour and Chastity may have a moral Inability to prostitute her self to her Slave. A Child of great Love and Duty to his Parents, may be unable to be willing to kill his Father. A very lascivious Man, in Case of certain Opportunities and Temptations, and in the Absence of such and such Restraints, may be unable to forbear gratifying his Lust. A Drunkard, under such and such Circumstances, may be unable to forbear taking of strong Drink. A very malicious Man may be unable to exert benevolent Acts to an Enemy, or to desire his Prosperity: Yea, some may be so under the Power of a vile Disposition, that they may be unable to love those who are most worthy of their Esteem & Affection. A strong Habit of Virtue and great Degree of Holiness may cause a moral Inability to love Wickedness in general, may render a

Man

Man unable to take Complacence in wicked Persons or Things; or to chuse a wicked Life, and prefer it to a vertuous Life. And on the other Hand, a great Degree of habitual Wickedness may lay a Man under an Inability to love and choose Holiness; and render him utterly unable to love an infinitely holy Being, or to choose and cleave to him as his chief Good.

Here it may be of Use to observe this Distinction of moral Inability, *viz.* of that which is *general and habitual*, and that which is *particular and occasional*. By a *general and habitual* moral Inability, I mean an Inability in the Heart to all Exercises or Acts of Will of that Nature or Kind, through a fix'd and habitual Inclination, or an habitual and stated Defect, or Want of a certain Kind of Inclination. Thus a very ill-natur'd Man may be unable to exert such Acts of Benevolence, as another, who is full of good Nature, commonly exerts; and a Man, whose Heart is habitually void of Gratitude, may be unable to exert such and such grateful Acts, through that stated Defect of a grateful Inclination. By *particular and occasional* moral Inability, I mean an Inability of the Will or Heart to a particular Act, thro' the Strength or Defect of present Motives, or of Inducements presented to the View of the Understanding, *on this Occasion*.---- If it be so, that the Will is always determined by the strongest Motive, then it must always have an Inability, in this latter Sense, to act otherwise than it does; it not being possible, in any Case, that the Will should, at present, go against the Motive which has now, all Things considered, the greatest Strength & Advantage to excite and induce it.---The former of these Kinds of moral Inability, consisting in that which is stated habitual and general, is most commonly called by the Name of Inability; because the Word *Inability*, in its most proper and original Signification, has Respect to some *stated Defect*. And this especially obtains the Name of *Inability* also upon another Account:---- I before observed, that the Word Inability in its original and most common Use, is a relative Term; and has Respect to Will and Endeavour, as supposable in the Case, and as insufficient to bring to pass the Thing desired and endeavoured. Now there may be more of an Appearance & Shadow of this, with Respect to the Acts which arise from a fix'd and strong Habit, than others that arise only from transient Occasions and Causes. Indeed Will and Endeavour against, or diverse from *present* Acts of the Will, are in no Case supposable, whether those Acts be occasional or habitual; for that would be to suppose the Will, at present, to be otherwise than, at present,

it is. But yet there may be Will and Endeavour againſt *future* Acts of the Will, or Volitions that are likely to take Place, as view'd at a Diſtance. 'Tis no Contradiction, to ſuppoſe that the Acts of the Will at one Time, may be againſt the Acts of the Will at another Time; and there may be Deſires and Endeavours to prevent or excite future Acts of the Will; But ſuch Deſires and Endeavours are, in many Caſes, rendered inſufficient & vain, thro' Fixedneſs of Habit: When the Occaſion returns, the Strength of Habit overcomes, and baffles all ſuch Oppoſition. In this Reſpect, a Man may be in miſerable Slavery and Bondage to a ſtrong Habit. But it may be comparatively eaſy to make an Alteration with Reſpect to ſuch future Acts, as are only occaſional and tranſient; becauſe the Occaſion or tranſient Cauſe, if foreſeen, may often eaſily be prevented or avoided. On this Account, the moral Inability that attends fix'd Habits, eſpecially obtains the Name of *Inability*. And then, as the Will may remotely and indirectly reſiſt it ſelf, and do it in vain, in the Caſe of ſtrong Habits; ſo Reaſon may reſiſt preſent Acts of the Will, and it's Reſiſtance be inſufficient; and this is more commonly the Caſe alſo, when the Acts ariſe from ſtrong Habit.

But it muſt be obſerved concerned moral Inability, in each Kind of it, that the Word *Inability* is uſed in a Senſe very diverſe from its original Import. The Word ſignifies only a natural Inability, in the proper Uſe of it; and is applied to ſuch Caſes only wherein a preſent Will or Inclination to the Thing, with Reſpect to which a Perſon is ſaid to be unable, is ſuppoſable. It can't be truly ſaid, according to the ordinary Uſe of Language, that a malicious Man, let him be never ſo malicious, can't hold his Hand from ſtriking, or that he is not able to ſhew his Neighbour Kindneſs; or that a Drunkard, let his Appetite be never ſo ſtrong, can't keep the Cup from his Mouth. In the ſtricteſt Propriety of Speech, a Man has a Thing in his Power, if he has it in his Choice, or at his Election: And a Man can't be truly ſaid to be unable to do a Thing, when he can do it if he will. 'Tis improperly ſaid, that a Perſon can't perform thoſe external Actions, which are dependent on the Act of the Will, and which would be eaſily performed, if the Act of the Will were preſent. And if it be improperly ſaid, that he cannot perform thoſe external voluntary Actions, which depend on the Will, 'tis in ſome Reſpect more improperly ſaid, that he is unable to exert the Acts of the Will themſelves; becauſe it is more evidently falſe, with Reſpect to theſe, that he can't if he will:

For

For to say so, is a down-right Contradiction: It is to say, he *can't* will, if he *does* will. And in this Case, not only is it true, that it is easy for a Man to do the Thing if he will but the very willing is the doing; when once he has will'd, the Thing is performed; and nothing else remains to be done. Therefore, in these Things to ascribe a Non-performance to the want of Power or Ability, is not just; because the Thing wanting is not a being *able*, but a being *willing*. There are Faculties of Mind, and Capacity of Nature, and every Thing else, sufficient, but a Disposition: Nothing is wanting but a Will.

Section V.

Concerning the Notion of Liberty, *and of* moral Agency.

THE plain and obvious Meaning of the Words *Freedom* and *Liberty*, in common Speech, is *Power, Opportunity, or Advantage, that any one has, to do as he pleases.* Or in other Words, his being free from Hindrance or Impediment in the Way of doing, or conducting in any Respect, as he wills. * And the contrary to Liberty, whatever Name we call that by, is a Person's being hinder'd or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise.

If this which I have mentioned be the Meaning of the Word Liberty, in the ordinary Use of Language; as I trust that none that has ever learn'd to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny; then it will follow, that in Propriety of Speech, neither Liberty, nor it's contrary, can properly be ascribed to any Being or Thing, but that which has such a Faculty, Power or Property, as is called Will. For that which is possessed of no such Thing as *Will*, can't have any *Power* or *Opportunity* of doing *according to it's Will*, nor be necessitated to act *contrary to its Will*, nor be restrained from acting agreably to it. And therefore to talk of Liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the *very Will it self*, is not to speak good Sense; if we judge of Sense, and Nonsense, by the original & proper Signification of Words. For the *Will it self* is not an Agent that *has a Will*: The Power of choosing, it self, has not a

* I say not only *doing*, but *conducting*; because a voluntary forbearing to do, sitting still, keeping Silence &c. are Instances of Persons *Conduct*, about which Liberty is exercised; tho' they are not so properly called *doing*.

Power of chuſing. That which has the Power of Volition or Choice is the Man or the Soul, and not the Power of Volition it ſelf. And he that has the Liberty of doing according to his Will, is the Agent or Doer who is poſſeſſed of the Will; and not the Will which he is poſſeſſed of. We ſay with Propriety, that a Bird let looſe has Power & Liberty to fly; but not that the Bird's Power of flying has a Power & Liberty of flying. To be free is the Property of an Agent, who is poſſeſſed of Powers & Faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But theſe Qualities are the Properties of Men or Perſons; and not the Properties of Properties.

There are two Things that are contrary to this which is called Liberty in common Speech. One is *Conſtraint*; the ſame is otherwiſe called *Force*, *Compulſion*, & *Coaction*; which is a Perſon's being neceſſitated to do a Thing *contrary* to his Will. The other is *Reſtraint*; which is his being hindred, and not having Power to do *according* to his Will. But that which has no Will, can't be the Subject of theſe Things. --- I need ſay the leſs on this Head, Mr. *Locke* having ſet the ſame Thing forth, with ſo great Clearneſs, in his *Eſſay on the human Underſtanding*.

But one Thing more I would obſerve concerning what is vulgarly called *Liberty*; namely, that Power & Opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his Choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the Meaning of the Word, any Thing of the Cauſe or Original of that Choice; or at all conſidering how the Perſon came to have ſuch a Volition; whether it was cauſed by ſome external Motive, or internal habitual Bias; whether it was determin'd by ſome internal antecedent Volition, or whether it happen'd without a Cauſe; whether it was neceſſarily connected with ſomething foregoing, or not connected. Let the Perſon come by his Volition or Choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is Nothing in the Way to hinder his purſuing and executing his Will, the Man is fully & perfectly free, according to the primary and common Notion of Freedom.

What has been ſaid may be ſufficient to ſhew what is meant by *Liberty*, according to the common Notions of Mankind, and in the uſual & primary Acceptation of the Word: But the Word, as uſed by *Arminians*, *Pelagians* & others, who oppoſe the *Calviniſts*, has an entirely different Signification.--- Theſe ſeveral Things belong to their Notion of Liberty.

1. That

1. That it consists in a *Self-determining Power* in the Will, or a certain Sovereignty the Will has over it self, and it's own Acts, whereby it determines it's own Volitions; so as not to be dependent in it's Determinations, on any Cause without it self, nor determined by any Thing prior to it's own Acts. 2. *Indifference* belongs to Liberty in their Notion of it, or that the Mind, previous to the Act of Volition be, *in iquilibrio*. 3. *Contingence* is another Thing that belongs and is essential to it; not in the common Acceptation of the Word, as that has been already explain'd, but as opposed to all *Necessity*, or any fixed & certain Connection with some previous Ground or Reason of it's Existence. They suppose the Essence of Liberty so much to consist in these Things, that unless the Will of Man be free in this Sense, he has no real Freedom, how much soever he may be at Liberty to act according to his Will.

A *moral Agent* is a Being that is capable of those Actions that have a moral Quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral Sense, vertuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral Agency belongs a *moral Faculty*, or Sense of moral Good & Evil, or of such a Thing as Desert or Worthiness of Praise or Blame, Reward or Punishment; and a Capacity which an Agent has of being influenced in his Actions by moral Inducements or Motives, exhibited to the View of Understanding & Reason, to engage to a Conduct agreable to the moral Faculty.

The Sun is very excellent & beneficial in it's Action and Influence on the Earth, in warming it, and causing it to bring forth it's Fruits; but it is not a moral Agent: It's Action, tho' good, is not vertuous or meritorious. Fire that breaks out in a City, and consumes great Part of it, is very mischievous in its Operation; but is not a moral Agent: what it does is not faulty or sinful, or deserving of any Punishment. The brute Creatures are not moral Agents: the Actions of some of 'em are very profitable & pleasant; others are very hurtful: yet, seeing they have no moral Faculty, or Sense of Desert, and don't act from Choice guided by Understanding, or with a Capacity of reasoning and reflecting, but only from Instinct, and are not capable of being influenced by moral Inducements, their Actions are not properly sinful or vertuous; nor are they properly the Subjects of any such moral Treatment for what they do, as moral Agents are for their Faults or good Deeds.

Here

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumſtantial Difference between the moral Agency of a *Ruler* and a *Subject*. I call it *circumſtantial*, becauſe it lies only in the Difference of moral Inducements they are capable of being influenced by, ariſing from the Difference of *Circumſtances*. A *Ruler* acting in that Capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral Law, and it's Sanctions of Threatnings and Promiſes, Rewards and Puniſhments, as the *Subject* is; tho' both may be influenced by a Knowledge of moral Good and Evil. And therefore the moral Agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the Capacity of a *Ruler* towards his Creatures, and never as a *Subject*, differs in that Reſpect from the moral Agency of created intelligent Beings. God's Actions, and particularly thoſe which he exerts as a moral Governour, have moral Qualifications, are morally good in the higheſt Degree. They are moſt perfectly holy & righteous; and we muſt conceive of Him as influenced in the higheſt Degree, by that which, above all others, is properly a moral Inducement; *viz.* the moral Good which He ſees in ſuch and ſuch Things: And therefore He is, in the moſt proper Senſe, a moral Agent, the Source of all moral Ability & Agency, the Fountain and Rule of all Vertue and moral Good; tho' by Reaſon of his being Supreme over all, 'tis not poſſible He ſhould be under the Influence of Law or Command, Promiſes or Threatnings, Rewards or Puniſhments, Counſels or Warnings. The eſſential Qualities of a moral Agent are in God, in the greateſt poſſible Perfection; ſuch as Underſtanding, to perceive the Difference between moral Good & Evil; a Capacity of diſcerning that moral Worthineſs and Demerit, by which ſome Things are Praiſe-worthy, others deſerving of Blame and Puniſhment; and alſo a Capacity of Choice, and Choice guided by Underſtanding, and a Power of acting according to his Choice or Pleaſure, and being capable of doing thoſe Things which are in the higheſt Senſe Praiſe-worthy. And herein does very much conſiſt that Image of God wherein he made Man, (which we read of *Gen.* I. 26,27. & *Chap.* IX. 6.) by which God diſtinguiſhed Man from the Beaſts, *viz.* in thoſe Faculties & Principles of Nature, whereby He is capable of moral Agency. Herein very much conſiſts the *natural* Image of God; as his *ſpiritual* and *moral* Image, wherein Man was made at firſt, conſiſted in that moral Excellency, that he was endowed with.

PART

PART II.

Wherein it is considered whether there is or can be any such Sort of FREEDOM OF WILL, as that wherein *Arminians* place the Essence of the Liberty of all moral Agents; and whether any such Thing ever *was* or *can be* conceived of.

SECTION I.

Shewing the manifest Inconsistence of the Arminian *Notion of* Liberty of Will, *consisting in the Will's* self-determining Power.

HAving taken Notice of those Things which may be necessary to be observed, concerning the Meaning of the principal Terms and Phrases made use of in Controversies concerning human Liberty, and particularly observed what *Liberty* is, according to the common Language, and general Apprehension of Mankind, and what it is as understood & maintained by *Arminians*; I proceed to consider the *Arminian* Notion of the *Freedom of the Will*, and the supposed Necessity of it in Order to moral Agency, or in Order to any One's being capable of Vertue or Vice, and properly the

the Subject of Command or Counſel, Praiſe or Blame, Promiſes or Threatnings, Rewards or Puniſhments; or whether that which has been deſcribed, as the Thing meant by Liberty in common Speech, be not ſufficient, and the only Liberty, which makes, or can make any one a moral Agent, and ſo properly the Subject of theſe Things. In *this Part*, I ſhall conſider whether any ſuch Thing be poſſible or conceivable, as that Freedom of Will which *Arminians* inſiſt on; and ſhall enquire whether any ſuch Sort of Liberty be neceſſary to moral Agency *&c.* in the *next* Part.

And Firſt of all, I ſhall conſider the Notion of *a Self-determining Power* in the Will: wherein, according to the *Arminians*, does moſt eſſentially conſiſt the Will's Freedom; and ſhall particularly enquire, whether it be not plainly abſurd, and a manifeſt Inconſiſtence, to ſuppoſe that *the Will it ſelf determines all the free Acts of the Will.*

Here I ſhall not inſiſt on the great Impropriety of ſuch Phraſes, and Ways of ſpeaking, as *the Will's determining it ſelf*; becauſe Actions are to be aſcribed to Agents, and not properly to the Powers of Agents; which improper Way of ſpeaking leads to many Miſtakes, and much Confuſion, as Mr. *Locke* obſerves. But I ſhall ſuppoſe that the *Arminians*, when they ſpeak of the Will's determining it ſelf, do by the *Will* mean the *Soul willing*. I ſhall take it for granted, that when they ſpeak of the Will, as the Determiner, they mean *the Soul in the Exerciſe of a Power of Willing*, or acting voluntarily. I ſhall ſuppoſe this to be their Meaning, becauſe Nothing elſe can be meant, without the groſſeſt and plaineſt Abſurdity. In all Caſes, when we ſpeak of the Powers or Principles of Acting, as doing ſuch Things, we mean that the Agents which have theſe Powers of acting, do them, in the Exerciſe of thoſe Powers. So when we ſay, Valour fights courageouſly, we mean, the Man who is under the Influence of Valour fights courageouſly. When we ſay, Love ſeeks the Object loved, we mean, the Perſon loving ſeeks that Object. When we ſay, the Underſtanding diſcerns, we mean the Soul in the Exerciſe of that Faculty. So when it is ſaid, the Will decides or determines, the Meaning muſt be, that the Perſon in the Exerciſe of a Power of Willing & Chuſing, or the Soul acting voluntarily, determines.

Therefore

Therefore, if the Will determines all its own free Acts, the Soul determines all the free Acts of the Will in the Exercise of a Power of Willing and Chusing; or, which is the same Thing, it determines them of Choice; it determines it's own Acts by chusing it's own Acts. If the Will determines the Will, then Choice orders and determines the Choice: and Acts of Choice are subject to the Decision, and follow the Conduct of other Acts of Choice. And therefore if the Will determines all it's own free Acts, then every free Act of Choice is determined by a preceeding Act of Choice, chusing that Act. And if that preceeding Act of the Will or Choice be also a free Act, then by these Principles, in this Act too, the Will is Self-determined; that is, this, in like Manner, is an Act that the Soul voluntarily chuses; or which is the same Thing, it is an Act determined still by a preceeding Act of the Will, chusing that. And the like may again be observed of the last mentioned Act. Which brings us directly to a Contradiction: for it supposes an Act of the Will preceeding the first Act in the whole Train, directing and determining the rest; or a free Act of the Will, before the first free Act of the Will. Or else we must come at last to an Act of the Will, determining the consequent Acts, wherein the Will is not self-determined, and so is not a free Act, in this Notion of Freedom: But if the first Act in the Train, determining and fixing the rest, be not free, none of them all can be free; as is manifest at first View, but shall be demonstrated presently.

If the Will, which we find governs the Members of the Body, and determines and commands their Motions and Actions, does also govern it self, and determine it's own Motions and Acts, it doubtless determines them the same Way, even by antecedent Volitions. The Will determines which Way the Hands and Feet shall move, by an Act of Volition or Choice: and there is no other Way of the Will's determining, directing or commanding any Thing at all. Whatsoever the Will commands, it commands by an Act of the Will. And if it has it self under it's Command, and determines it self in it's own Actions, it doubtless does it the same Way that it determines other Things which are under it's Command. So that if the Freedom of the Will consists in this, that it has it self and it's own Actions under it's Command and Direction, and it's own Volitions are determined by it self, it will follow, that every free Volition arises from another antecedent Volition, directing and commanding that: And if

that *directing* Volition be alſo free, in that alſo the Will is determined; that is to ſay, that directing Volition is determined by another going before that; and ſo on, 'till we come to the firſt Volition in the whole Series: And if that firſt Volition be free, and the Will ſelf-determined in it, then that is determined by another Volition preceeding that. Which is a Contradiction; becauſe by the Suppoſition, it can have none before it, to direct or determine it, being the firſt in the Train. But if that firſt Volition is not determined by any preceeding Act of the Will, then that Act is not determined by the Will, and ſo is not free, in the *Arminian* Notion of Freedom, which conſiſts in the Will's Self-determination. And if that firſt Act of the Will, which determines and fixes the ſubſequent Acts, be not free, none of the following Acts, which are determined by it, can be free.----If we ſuppoſe there are five Acts in the Train, the fifth and laſt determined by the fourth, and the fourth by the third, the third by the ſecond, and the ſecond by the firſt; If the firſt is not determined by the Will, and ſo not free, then none of them are truly determined by the Will: that is, that each of them are as they are, and not otherwiſe, is not firſt owing to the Will, but to the Determination of the firſt in the Series, which is not dependent on the Will, and is that which the Will has no Hand in the Determination of. And this being that which decides what the reſt ſhall be, and determines their Exiſtence; therefore the firſt Determination of their Exiſtence is not from the Will. The Caſe is juſt the ſame, if inſtead of a Chain of five Acts of the Will, we ſhould ſuppoſe a Succeſſion of Ten, or an Hundred, or ten Thouſand. If the firſt Act be not free, being determined by ſomething out of the Will, and this determines the next to be agreeable to it ſelf, and that the next, and ſo on; They are none of them free, but all orignally depend on, and are determined by ſome Cauſe out of the Will: and ſo all Freedom in the Caſe is excluded, and no Act of the Will can be free, according to this Notion of Freedom. If we ſhould ſuppoſe a long Chain, of ten Thouſand Links, ſo connected, that if the firſt Link moves, it will move the next, and that the next; and ſo the whole Chain muſt be determined to Motion, and in the Direction of it's Motion, by the Motion of the firſt Link; and that is moved by ſomething elſe: In this Caſe, tho' all the Links, but one, are moved by other Parts of the ſame Chain; yet it appears that the Motion of no One, nor the Direction of it's Motion, is from any Self-moving or Self-determining Power in the Chain, any more than if every

Link

Link were immediately moved by something that did not belong to the Chain.-----If the Will be not free in the first Act, which causes the next, then neither is it free in the next, which is caused by that first Act: for tho' indeed the Will caused it, yet it did not cause it freely; because the preceeding Act, by which it was caused, was not free. And again, if the Will ben't free in the second Act, so neither can it be in the third, which is caused by that; because, in like Manner, that third was determined by an Act of the Will that was not free. And so we may go on to the next Act, and from that to the next; And how long soever the Succession of Acts is, it is all one; if the first on which the whole Chain depends, and which determines all the rest, ben't a free Act, the Will is not free in causing or determining any one of those Acts; because the Act by which it determines them all, is not a free Act; and therefore the Will is no more free in determining them, than if it did not cause them at all. ---- Thus, this *Arminian* Notion of Liberty of the Will, consisting in the Will's *Self-Determination*, is repugnant to itself, and shuts it self wholly out of the World.

Section II.

Several supposed Ways of evading *the foregoing Reasoning, considered.*

If to evade the Force of what has been observed, it should be said, that when the *Arminians* speak of the Will's determining it's own Acts, they don't mean that the Will determines it's Acts by any preceeding Act, or that one Act of the Will determines another; but only that the Faculty or Power of Will, or the Soul in the Use of that Power, determines it's own Volitions; and that it does it without any Act going before the Act determined; such an Evasion would be full of the most gross Absurdity.-----I confess, it is an Evasion of my own inventing; and I don't know but I should wrong the *Arminians*, in supposing that any of them would make use of it. But it being as good a one as I can invent, I would observe upon it a few Things.

Firſt, If the Faculty or Power of the Will determines an Act of Volition, or the Soul in the *Uſe* or *Exerciſe of that Power*, determines it, that is the ſame Thing as for the Soul to determine Volition *by an Act of Will*. For an *Exerciſe* of the Power of Will, and an *Act* of that Power, are the ſame Thing. Therefore to ſay, that the Power of Will, or the Soul in the *Uſe* or *Exerciſe* of that Power, determines Volition, without an *Act* of Will preceeding the Volition determined, is a Contradiction.

Secondly, If a Power of Will determines the Act of the Will, then a Power of Chuſing determines it. For, as was before obſerved, in every Act of Will, there is Choice, and a Power of Willing is a Power of Chuſing. But if a Power of Chuſing determines the Act of Volition, it determines it by chuſing it. For 'tis moſt abſurd to ſay, that a Power of Chuſing determines one Thing rather than another, without chuſing any Thing. But if a Power of Chuſing determines Volition by chuſing it, then here is the Act of Volition determined by an antecedent Choice, chuſing that Volition.

Thirdly, To ſay, the Faculty, or the Soul, determines it's own Volition, but not by any Act, is a Contradiction. Becauſe for the Soul to *direct*, *decide*, or *determine* any Thing, is to act; and this is ſuppoſed; for the Soul is here ſpoken of as being a Cauſe in this Affair, bringing ſomething to paſs, or doing ſomething; or, which is the ſame Thing, exerting it ſelf in order to an Effect, which Effect is the Determination of Volition, or the particular Kind and Manner of an Act of Will. But certainly, this Exertion or Action is not the ſame with the Effect, in order to the Production of which it is exerted; but muſt be ſomething prior to it.

Again, The Advocates for this Notion of the Freedom of the Will, ſpeak of a certain *Sovereignty* in the Will, whereby it has Power to determine it's own Volitions. And therefore the Determination of Volition muſt itſelf be an Act of the Will; for otherwiſe it can be no Exerciſe of that ſuppoſed Power and Sovereignty.

Again, If the Will determines it ſelf, then either the Will is *active* in determining it's Volitions, or it is not. If it be active in it, then the Determination is an *Act* of the Will; and ſo there is one Act of the Will determining another. But if the Will is not *active* in the Determination, then how does

does it *exerciſe* any Liberty in it? Theſe Gentlemen ſuppoſe that the Thing wherein the Will *exerciſes* Liberty, is in it's determining it's own Acts. But how can this be, if it ben't *active* in determining? Certainly the Will, or the Soul, can't *exerciſe any Liberty* in that wherein it don't *act*, or wherein it don't *exerciſe it ſelf*. So that if either Part of this Dilemma be taken, this Scheme of Liberty, conſiſting in Self-determining Power, is overthrown. If there be an Act of the Will in determining all it's own free Acts, then one free Act of the Will is determined by another; and ſo we have the Abſurdity of every free Act, even the very firſt, determined by a foregoing free Act. But if there be no Act or Exerciſe of the Will in determining it's own Acts, then no Liberty is exerciſed in determining them. From whence it follows, that no Liberty conſiſts in the Will's Power to determine it's own Acts: Or, which is the ſame Thing, that there is no ſuch Thing as Liberty conſiſting in a Self-determining Power of the Will.

If it ſhould be ſaid, That altho' it be true, if the Soul determines it's own Volitions, it muſt be active in ſo doing, and the Determination it ſelf muſt be an Act; yet there is no Need of ſuppoſing this Act to be prior to the Volition determined; But the Will or Soul determines the Act of the Will *in Willing*; It determines it's own Volition, *in* the very Act of Volition; It directs and limits the Act of the Will, cauſing it to be ſo and not otherwiſe, *in* exerting the Act, without any preceeding Act to exert that. If any ſhould ſay after this Manner, they muſt mean one of theſe three Things: Either, (1.) That the determining Act, tho' it be before the Act determined in the Order of Nature, yet is not before it in the Order of Time. Or (2) That the determining Act is not before the Act determined, either in the Order of Time or Nature, nor is truly diſtinct from it; But that the Soul's determining the Act of Volition is the ſame Thing with it's exerting the Act of Volition: The Mind's exerting ſuch a particular Act, is it's cauſing and determining the Act. Or, (3.) That Volition has no Cauſe, and is no Effect; but comes into Exiſtence, with ſuch a particular Determination, without any Ground or Reaſon of it's Exiſtence and Determination.---- I ſhall conſider theſe diſtinctly.

(1.) If all that is meant, be, that the determining Act is not before the Act determined in Order of *Time*, it will not help the Caſe at all, tho' it ſhould be allowed. If it be before

fore the determin'd Act in the Order of Nature, being the Cauſe or Ground of it's Exiſtence, this as much proves it to be diſtinct from it, and independent on it, as if it were before in the Order of Time. As the Cauſe of the particular Motion of a natural Body in a certain Direction, may have no Diſtance as to Time, yet can't be the ſame with the Motion effected by it, but muſt be as diſtinct from it, as any other Cauſe, that is before it's Effect in the Order of Time: as the Architect is diſtinct from the Houſe which he builds, or the Father diſtinct from the Son which he begets. And if the Act of the Will determining be diſtinct from the Act determined, and before it in the Order of Nature, then we can go back from one to another, 'till we come to the firſt in the Series, which has no Act of the Will before it in the Order of Nature, determining it; and conſequently is an Act not determined by the Will, and ſo not a free Act, in this Notion of Freedom. And this being the Act which determines all the Reſt, none of them are free Acts. As when there is a Chain of many Links, the firſt of which only is taken hold of and drawn by Hand; all the reſt may follow and be moved at the ſame Inſtant, without any Diſtance of Time; but yet the Motion of one Link is before that of another in the Order of Nature; the laſt is moved by the next, and that by the next, and ſo 'till we come to the firſt; which not being moved by any other, but by ſomething diſtinct from the whole Chain, this as much proves that no Part is moved by any Self-moving Power in the Chain, as if the Motion of one Link followed that of another in the Order of Time.

(2.) If any ſhould ſay, that the determining Act is not before the determined Act, either in the Order of Time, or of Nature, nor is diſtinct from it; but that the *Exertion* of the Act is the *Determination* of the Act; That for the Soul to exert a particular Volition, is for it to cauſe and determine that Act of Volition: I would on this obſerve, that the Thing in Queſtion ſeems to be forgotten, or kept out of Sight, in a Darkneſs and Unintelligibleneſs of Speech; unleſs ſuch an Objector would mean to contradict himſelf. The very Act of Volition it ſelf is doubtleſs a Determination of Mind; i. e. it is the Mind's drawing up a Concluſion, or coming to a Choice between two Things, or more, propoſed to it. But determining among external *Objects* of Choice, is not the ſame with determining the *Act* of Choice it ſelf, among various poſſible Acts of Choice. The Queſtion is, What influences, directs, or determines the Mind or Will to come

to

to such a Conclusion or Choice as it does? or what is the Cause, Ground or Reason, why it concludes thus, and not otherwise? Now it must be answered, according to the *Arminian* Notion of Freedom, that the Will influences, orders and determines it self thus to act. And if it does, I say, it must be by some antecedent Act. To say, it is caused, influenced and determined by something, and yet not determined by any Thing antecedent, either in Order of Time or Nature, is a Contradiction. For that is what is meant by a Thing's being prior in the Order of Nature, that it is some Way the Cause or Reason of the Thing, with Respect to which it is said to be prior.

If the particular Act or Exertion of Will, which comes into Existence, be any Thing properly determined at all, then it has some Cause of it's existing, and of it's existing in such a particular determinate Manner, and not another; some Cause, whose Influence *decides the Matter*: which Cause is distinct from the Effect, and prior to it. But to say, that the Will or Mind orders, influences and determines it self to exert such an Act as it does, by the very Exertion it self, is to make the Exertion both Cause & Effect; or the exerting such an Act, to be a Cause of the Exertion of such an Act. For the Question is, What is the Cause and Reason of the Soul's exerting such an Act? To which the Answer is, the Soul exerts such an Act, and that is the Cause of it. And so, by this, the Exertion must be prior in the Order of Nature to it self, and distinct from it self.

(3.) If the Meaning be, that the Soul's Exertion of such a particular Act of Will, is a Thing that comes to pass *of it self*, without any Cause; and that there is absolutely no Ground or Reason of the Soul's being determined to exert such a Volition, and make such a Choice, rather than another; I say, if this be the Meaning of *Arminians*, when they contend so earnestly for the Will's determining it's own Acts, and for Liberty of Will consisting in Self-determining Power; they do nothing but confound Themselves and others with Words without a Meaning. In the Question, *What determines the Will?* and in their Answer, that *the Will determines it self*, and in all the Dispute about it, it seems to be taken for granted, that something determines the Will; and the Controversy on this Head is not, whether any Thing at all determines it, or whether it's Determination has any Cause or Foundation at all: But where the Foundation of it is, whether in the

Will

Will it ſelf, or ſomewhere elſe. But if the Thing intended be what is above-mention'd, then all comes to this, that Nothing at all determines the Will; Volition having abſolutely no Cauſe orFoundation of it'sExiſtence,either within, or without. There is a great Noiſe made about Self-determining Power, as the Source of all free Acts of the Will: But when the Matter comes to be explained, the Meaning is, that no Power at all is the Source of theſe Acts, neither Self-determining Power, nor any other, but they ariſe from Nothing; no Cauſe, no Power, no Influence, being at all concern'd in the Matter.

However, this very Thing, even that the free Acts of the Will are Events which come to paſs without a Cauſe, is certainly implied in the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty of Will; tho' it be very inconſiſtent with many other Things in their Scheme, and repugnant to ſome Things implied in their Notion of Liberty. Their Opinion implies, that the particular Determination of Volition is without any Cauſe; becauſe they hold the free Acts of the Will to be *Contingent* Events; and Contingence is eſſential to Freedom in their Notion of it. But certainly, thoſe Things which have a prior Ground and Reaſon of their particular Exiſtence, a Cauſe which antecedently determines them to be, and determines them to be juſt as they are, don't happen contingently. If ſomething foregoing, by a cauſal Influence and Connection, determines and fixes preciſely their coming to paſs, and the Manner of it, then it don't remain a contingent Thing whether They ſhall come to paſs or no.

And becauſe it is a Queſtion, in many Reſpects, very important in this Controverſy about the Freedom of Will, *Whether the free Acts of the Will are Events which come to paſs without a Cauſe?* I ſhall be particular in examining this Point in the two following Sections.

SECTION

Section III.

Whether any Event whatsoever, and Volition *in particular, can come to pass* without *a* Cause *of it's Existence.*

Before I enter on any Argument on this Subject, I would explain how I would be understood, when I use the Word *Cause* in this Discourse: since, for want of a better Word, I shall have Occasion to use it in a Sense which is more extensive, than that in which it is sometimes used. The Word is often used in so restrained a Sense as to signify only that which has a *positive Efficiency* or Influence *to produce* a Thing, or bring it to pass. But there are many Things which have no such positive productive Influence; which yet are Causes in that Respect, that they have truly the Nature of a Ground or Reason why some Things are, rather than others; or why they are as they are, rather than otherwise. Thus the Absence of the Sun in the Night, is not the Cause of the falling of the Dew at that Time, in the same Manner as it's Beams are the Cause of the Ascending of the Vapours in the Day-Time; And it's Withdrawment in the Winter, is not in the same Manner the Cause of the Freezing of the Waters, as it's Approach in the Spring is the Cause of their Thawing. But yet the Withdrawment or Absence of the Sun is an Antecedent, with which these Effects in the Night and Winter are connected, and on which they depend; and is one Thing that belongs to the Ground and Reason why they come to pass at that Time, rather than at other Times; tho' the Absence of the Sun is Nothing positive, nor has any positive Influence.

It may be further observed, that when I speak of *Connection of Causes and Effects*, I have Respect to *moral* Causes, as well as those that are called *natural* in Distinction from 'em. Moral Causes may be Causes in as proper a Sense, as any Causes whatsoever; may have as real an Influence, and may as truly be the Ground and Reason of an Event's coming to pass.

Therefore I sometimes use the Word *Cause*, in this Enquiry, to signify any *Antecedent*, either natural or moral, positive or

negative, on which an Event, either a Thing, or the Manner and Circumſtance of a Thing, ſo depends, that it is the Ground and Reaſon, either in Whole, or in Part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwiſe; Or, in other Words, any Antecedent with which a conſequent Event is ſo connected, that it truly belongs to the Reaſon why the Propoſition which affirms that Event, is true; whether it has any poſitive Influence, or not. And in an Agreableneſs to this, I ſometimes uſe the Word *Effect*, for the Conſequence of another Thing, which is perhaps rather an Occaſion than a Cauſe, moſt properly ſpeaking.

I am the more careful thus to explain my Meaning, that I may cut off Occaſion, from any that might ſeek Occaſion to cavil and object againſt ſome Things which I may ſay concerning the Dependance of all Things which come to paſs, on ſome Cauſe, and their Connection with their Cauſe.

Having thus explain'd what I mean by *Cauſe*, I aſſert, that Nothing ever comes to paſs without a Cauſe. What is Self-exiſtent muſt be from Eternity, and muſt be unchangeable: But as to all Things that *begin to be*, they are not Self-exiſtent, and therefore muſt have ſome Foundation of their Exiſtence without themſelves. --- That whatſoever begins to be, which before was not, muſt have a Cauſe why it then begins to exiſt, ſeems to be the firſt Dictate of the common and natural Senſe which God hath implanted in the Minds of all Mankind, and the main Foundation of all our Reaſonings about the Exiſtence of Things, paſt, preſent, or to come.

And this Dictate of common Senſe equally reſpects Subſtances and Modes, or Things and the Manner and Circumſtances of Things. Thus, if we ſee a Body which has hitherto been at Reſt, ſtart out of a State of Reſt, and begin to move, we do as naturally and neceſſarily ſuppoſe there is ſome Cauſe or Reaſon of this new Mode of Exiſtence, as of the Exiſtence of a Body it ſelf which had hitherto not exiſted. And ſo if a Body, which had hitherto moved in a certain Direction, ſhould ſuddenly change the Direction of its Motion; or if it ſhould put off it's old Figure, and take a new one; or change it's Colour: the Beginning of theſe new Modes is a new Event, and the Mind of Mankind neceſſarily ſuppoſes that there is ſome Cauſe or Reaſon of them.

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If this grand Principle of common Sense be taken away, all Arguing from Effects to Causes ceaseth, and so all Knowlege of any Existence, besides what we have by the most direct and immediate Intuition. Particularly all our Proof of the Being of God ceases: We argue his Being from our own Being, and the Being of other Things, which we are sensible once were not, but have begun to be; and from the Being of the World, with all it's constituent Parts, and the Manner of their Existence; all which we see plainly are not necessary in their own Nature, and so not Self-existent, and therefore must have a Cause. But if Things, not in themselves necessary, may begin to be without a Cause, all this arguing is vain.

Indeed, I will not affirm, that there is in the Nature of Things no Foundation for the Knowledge of the Being of God without any Evidence of it from his Works. I do suppose there is a great Absurdity, in the Nature of Things simply considered, in supposing that there should be no God, or in denying Being in general, and supposing an eternal, absolute, universal Nothing: And therefore that here would be Foundation of intuitive Evidence that it cannot be, and that eternal infinite most perfect Being must be; if we had Strength and Comprehension of Mind sufficient, to have a clear Idea of general and universal Being, or, which is the same Thing, of the infinite, eternal, most perfect divine Nature and Essence. But then we should not properly come to the Knowledge of the Being of God by arguing; but our Evidence would be intuitive: We should see it, as we see other Things that are necessary in themselves, the Contraries of which are in their own Nature absurd and contradictory; as we see that twice two is four; and as we see that a Circle has no Angles. If we had as clear an Idea of universal infinite Entity, as we have of these other Things, I suppose we should most intuitively see the Absurdity of supposing such Being not to be; should immediately see there is no Room for the Question, whether it is possible that Being, in the most general abstracted Notion of it, should not be. But we have not that Strength and Extent of Mind, to know this certainly in this intuitive independent Manner: But the Way that Mankind come to the Knowledge of the Being of God, is that which the Apostle speaks of, Rom. i. 20. *The invisible Things of Him, from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen; being understood by the Things that are made; even his eternal Power and Godhead.* We *first ascend*, and prove *à*

Poſteriori, or from Effects, that there muſt be an eternal Cauſe; and then *ſecondly*, prove by Argumentation, not Intuition, that this Being muſt be neceſſarily exiſtent; and then *thirdly*, from the proved Neceſſity of his Exiſtence, we may *deſcend*, and prove many of his Perfections *à Priori*.

But if once this grand Principle of common Senſe be given up, that *what is not neceſſary in it ſelf, muſt have a Cauſe*; and we begin to maintain, that Things may come into Exiſtence, and begin to be, which heretofore have not been, of themſelves, without any Cauſe; all our Means of aſcending in our arguing from the Creature to the Creator, and all our Evidence of the Being of God, is cut off at one Blow. In this Caſe, we can't prove that there is a God, either from the Being of the World, and the Creatures in it, or from the Manner of their Being, their Order, Beauty and Uſe. For if Things may come into Exiſtence without any Cauſe at all, then they doubtleſs may without any Cauſe anſwerable to the Effect. Our Minds do alike naturally ſuppoſe and determine both theſe Things; namely, that what begins to be has a Cauſe, and alſo that it has a Cauſe proportionable and agreable to the Effect. The ſame Principle which leads us to determine, that there cannot be any Thing coming to paſs without a Cauſe, leads us to determine that there cannot be more in the Effect than in the Cauſe.

Yea, if once it ſhould be allowed, that Things may come to paſs without a Cauſe, we ſhould not only have no Proof of the Being of God, but we ſhould be without Evidence of the Exiſtence of any Thing whatſoever, but our own immediately preſent Ideas and Conſciouſneſs. For we have no Way to prove any Thing elſe, but by arguing from Effects to Cauſes: from the Ideas now immediately in View, we argue other Things not immediately in View: from Senſations now excited in us, we infer the Exiſtence of Things without us, as the Cauſes of theſe Senſations: And from the Exiſtence of theſe Things, we argue other Things, which they depend on, as Effects on Cauſes. We infer the paſt Exiſtence of our Selves, or any Thing elſe, by Memory; only as we argue, that the Ideas, which are now in our Minds, are the Conſequences of paſt Ideas and Senſations. We immediately perceive nothing elſe but the Ideas which are this Moment extant in our Minds. We perceive or know other Things only *by Means* of theſe, as neceſſarily connected with others,

others, and dependent on them. But if Things may be without Causes, all this necessary Connection and Dependence is dissolved, and so all Means of our Knowledge is gone. If there be no Absurdity or Difficulty in supposing one Thing to start out of Non-Existence, into Being, of it self without a Cause; then there is no Absurdity or Difficulty in supposing the same of Millions of Millions. For Nothing, or no Difficulty multiplied, still is Nothing, or no Difficulty: Nothing multiplied by Nothing don't increase the Sum.

And indeed, according to the Hypothesis I am opposing, of the Acts of the Will coming to pass without a Cause, it is the Case in Fact, that Millions of Millions of Events are continually coming into Existence *Contingently*, without any Cause or Reason why they do so, all over the World, every Day and Hour, thro' all Ages. So it is in a constant Succession, in every moral Agent. This Contingency, this efficient Nothing, this effectual No-Cause, is always ready at Hand, to produce this Sort of Effects, as long as the Agent exists, and as often as he has Occasion.

If it were so, that Things only of one Kind, *viz.* Acts of the Will, seem'd to come to pass of Themselves; but those of this Sort in general came into Being thus; and it were an Event that was continual, and that happen'd in a Course, wherever were capable Subjects of such Events; this very Thing would demonstrate that there was some Cause of them, which made such a Difference between this Event and others, and that they did not really happen contingently. For Contingence is blind, and does not pick and choose for a particular Sort of Events. Nothing has no Choice. ThisNo-Cause, which causes no Existence, can't cause the Existence which comes to pass, to be of one particular Sort only, distinguish'd from all others. Thus, that only one Sort of Matter drops out of the Heavens, even Water, and that this comes so often, so constantly and plentifully, all over the World, in all Ages, shows that there is some Cause or Reason of the falling of Water out of the Heavens; and that something besides meer Contingence has a Hand in the Matter.

If we should suppose Non-entity to be about to bring forth; and Things were coming into Existence, without any Cause or Antecedent, on which the Existence, or Kind or Manner of Existence depends; or which could at all determine whether the Things should be; Stones, or Stars, or Beasts, or Angels,

Angels, or human Bodies, or Souls, or only some new Motion or Figure in natural Bodies, or some new Sensations in Animals, or new Ideas in the human Understanding, or new Volitions in the Will; or any Thing else of all the infinite Number of Possibles; then certainly it would not be expected, altho' many Millions of Millions of Things are coming into Existence in this Manner, all over the Face of the Earth, that they should all be only of one particular Kind, and that it should be thus in all Ages, and that this Sort of Existences should never fail to come to pass where there is Room for them, or a Subject capable of them, and that constantly, whenever there is Occasion for them.

If any should imagine, there is something in the Sort of Event that renders it possible for it to come into Existence without a Cause; and should say, that the free Acts of the Will are Existences of an exceeding different Nature from other Things; by Reason of which they may come into Existence without any previous Ground or Reason of it, tho' other Things cannot; If they make this Objection in good Earnest, it would be an Evidence of their strangely forgetting themselves: For they would be giving an Account of some Ground of the Existence of a Thing, when at the same Time they would maintain there is no Ground of it's Existence. Therefore I would observe, that the particular Nature of Existence, be it never so diverse from others, can lay no Foundation for that Thing's coming into Existence without a Cause; because to suppose this, would be to suppose the particular Nature of Existence to be a Thing prior to the Existence; and so a Thing which makes Way for Existence, with such a Circumstance, namely without a Cause or Reason of Existence. But that which in any Respect makes Way for a Thing's coming into Being, or for any Manner or Circumstance of it's first Existence, must be prior to the Existence. The distinguish'd Nature of the Effect, which is something belonging to the Effect, can't have Influence backward, to act before it is. The peculiar Nature of that Thing called Volition, can do Nothing, can have no Influence, while it is not. And afterwards it is too late for it's Influence: for then the Thing has made sure of Existence already, without it's Help.

So that it is indeed as repugnant to Reason, to suppose that an Act of the Will should come into Existence without a Cause, as to suppose the human Soul, or an Angel, or the

the Globe of the Earth, or the whole Universe, should come into Existence without a Cause. And if once we allow, that such a Sort of Effect as a Volition may come to pass without a Cause, how do we know but that many other Sorts of Effects may do so too? 'Tis not the particular Kind of Effect that makes the Absurdity of supposing it has being without a Cause, but something which is common to all Things that ever begin to be, *viz.* that they are not Self-existent, or necessary in the Nature of Things.

SECTION IV.

Whether Volition *can arise without a Cause, through the* Activity *of the Nature of the Soul.*

THE Author of the *Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creatures*, in Answer to that Objection against his Doctrine of a Self-determining Power in the Will, (P. 68, 69.) *That Nothing is, or comes to pass, without a sufficient Reason why it is, and why it is in this Manner rather than another*, allows that it is thus in corporeal Things, *which are properly and philosophically speaking passive Beings*; but denies that it is thus in *Spirits, which are Beings of an active Nature, who have the Spring of Action within themselves, and can determine themselves.* By which it is plainly supposed, that such an Event as an Act of the Will, may come to pass in a Spirit, without a sufficient Reason why it comes to pass, or why it is after this Manner, rather than another; by Reason of the Activity of the Nature of a Spirit.---- But certainly this Author, in this Matter, must be very unwary and inadvertent. For,

1. The Objection or Difficulty proposed by this Author, seems to be forgotten in his Answer or Solution. The very Difficulty, as he himself proposes it, is this; How an Event can *come to pass without a sufficient Reason why it is, or why it is in this Manner rather than another?* Instead of solving this Difficulty, or answering this Question with Regard to Volition, as he proposes, he forgets himself, and answers another Question quite diverse, and wholly inconsistent with this, *viz.* What is a sufficient Reason why it is, and why it is in

in this Manner rather than another? And he aſſigns the Active Being's own Determination as the Cauſe, and a Cauſe ſufficient for the Effect; and leaves all the Difficulty unreſolved, and the Queſtion unanſwered, which yet returns, even, How the Soul's own Determination, which he ſpeaks of, came to exiſt, and to be what it was without a Cauſe? The Activity of the Soul may enable it to be the Cauſe of Effects; but it don't at all enable or help it to be the Subject of Effects which have no Cauſe; which is the Thing this Author ſuppoſes concerning Acts of the Will. Activity of Nature will no more enable a Being to produce Effects, and determine the Manner of their Exiſtence, *within* it ſelf, without a Cauſe, than *out of* it ſelf, in ſome other Being. But if an active Being ſhould, through it's Activity, produce and determine an Effect in ſome external Object, how abſurd would it be to ſay, that the Effect was produced without a Cauſe!

2. The Queſtion is not ſo much, How a Spirit endowed with Activity comes to act, as why it exerts ſuch an Act, and not another; or why it acts with ſuch a particular Determination? If Activity of Nature be the Cauſe why a Spirit (the Soul of Man for Inſtance) acts, and don't lie ſtill; yet that alone is not the Cauſe why it's Action is thus and thus limited, directed and determined. Active Nature is a *general* Thing; 'tis an Ability or Tendency of Nature to Action, generally taken; which may be a Cauſe why the Soul acts as Occaſion or Reaſon is given; but this alone can't be a ſufficient Cauſe why the Soul exerts ſuch a *particular* Act, at ſuch a Time, rather than others. In order to this, there muſt be ſomething beſides a *general* Tendency to Action; there muſt alſo be a *particular* Tendency to that individual Action. ---- If it ſhould be aſked, why the Soul of Man uſes it's Activity in ſuch a Manner as it does; and it ſhould be anſwered, that the Soul uſes it's Activity thus, rather than otherwiſe, becauſe it has Activity; would ſuch an Anſwer ſatisfy a rational Man? Would it not rather be looked upon as a very impertinent one?

3. An active Being can bring no Effects to paſs by his Activity, but what are conſequent upon his acting: He produces Nothing by his Activity, any other Way than by the Exerciſe of his Activity, and ſo Nothing but the Fruits of it's Exerciſe: He brings Nothing to paſs by a dormant Activity. But the Exerciſe of his Activity is Action; and ſo his Action, or Exerciſe of his Activity, muſt be prior to the Effects

Effects of his Activity. If an active Being produces an Effect in another Being, about which his Activity is conversant, the Effect being the Fruit of his Activity, his Activity must be first exercised or exerted, and the Effect of it must follow. So it must be, with equal Reason, if the active Being is his own Object, and his Activity is conversant about Himself, to produce and determine some Effect in himself; still the Exercise of his Activity must go before the Effect, which he brings to pass and determines by it. And therefore his Activity can't be the Cause of the Determination of the first Action, or Exercise of Activity it self, whence the Effects of Activity arise; for that would imply a Contradiction; It would be to say, the first Exercise of Activity is before the first Exercise of Activity, and is the Cause of it.

4. That the Soul, tho' an active Substance, can't *diversify* it's own Acts, but by first acting; or be a determining Cause of *different* Acts, or any different Effects, sometimes of one Kind, and sometimes of another, any other Way than in Consequence of it's own diverse Acts, is manifest by this; That if so, then the *same* Cause, the *same* causal Power, Force or Influence, *without Variation in any Respect*, would produce *different* Effects at different Times. For the same Substance of the Soul before it acts, and the same active Nature of the Soul before it is exerted (i. e. before in the Order of Nature) would be the Cause of different Effects, *viz.* different Volitions at different Times. But the Substance of the Soul before it acts, and it's active Nature before it is exerted, are the same without Variation. For 'tis some Act that makes the first Variation in the Cause, as to any causal Exertion, Force or Influence. But if it be so, that the Soul has no different Causality, or diverse causal Force or Influence, in producing these diverse Effects; then 'tis evident, that the Soul has no Influence, no Hand in the diversity of the Effect; and that the Difference of the Effect can't be owing to any Thing in the Soul; or which is the same Thing, the Soul don't determine the Diversity of the Effect; which is contrary to the Supposition. ---- 'Tis true, the Substance of the Soul before it acts, and before there is any Difference in that Respect, may be in a different State and Circumstances: But those whom I oppose, will not allow the different Circumstances of the Soul to be the determining Causes of the Acts of the Will; as being contrary to their Notion of Self-determination and Self-motion.

5. Let us ſuppoſe, as theſe Divines do, that there are no Acts of the Soul, ſtrictly ſpeaking, but free Volitions; Then it will follow, that the Soul is an active Being in Nothing further than it is a voluntary or elective Being; and whenever it produces Effects actively, it produces Effects voluntarily and electively. But to produce Effects thus, is the ſame Thing as to produce Effects *in Conſequence of*, and *according to* it's own Choice. And if ſo, then ſurely the Soul don't by it's Activity produce all it's own Acts of Will or Choice themſelves: For this, by the Suppoſition, is to produce all it's free Acts of Choice voluntarily and electively, or in Conſequence of it's own free Acts of Choice, which brings the Matter directly to the fore-mentioned Contradiction, of a free Act of Choice before the firſt free Act of Choice.---- According to theſe Gentlemen's own Notion of Action, if there ariſes in the Mind a Volition without a free Act of the Will or Choice to determine and produce it, the Mind is not the active voluntary Cauſe of that Volition; becauſe it don't ariſe from, nor is regulated by Choice or Deſign. And therefore it can't be, that the Mind ſhould be the active, voluntary, determining Cauſe of the firſt and leading Volition that relates to the Affair. ---- The Mind's being a *deſigning* Cauſe, only enables it to produce Effects in Conſequence of it's *Deſign*; it will not enable it to be the deſigning Cauſe of all it's own Deſigns. The Mind's being an *elective* Cauſe, will only enable it to produce Effects in Conſequence of it's *Elections*, and according to them; but can't enable it to be the elective Cauſe of all it's own Elections; becauſe that ſuppoſes an Election before the firſt Election. So the Mind's being an *active* Cauſe enables it to produce Effects in Conſequence of it's own *Acts*, but can't enable it to be the determining Cauſe of all it's own Acts; for that is ſtill in the ſame Manner a Contradiction; as it ſuppoſes a determining Act converſant about the firſt Act, and prior to it, having a cauſal Influence on it's Exiſtence, and Manner of Exiſtence.

I can conceive of Nothing elſe that can be meant by the Soul's having Power to cauſe and determine it's own Volitions, as a Being to whom God has given a Power of Action, but this; that God has given Power to the Soul, ſometimes at leaſt, to excite Volitions at it's Pleaſure, or according as it chuſes. And this certainly ſuppoſes, in all ſuch Caſes, a Choice preceeding all Volitions which are

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thus caused, even the very first of them. Which runs into the fore-mentioned great Absurdity.

Therefore the Activity of the Nature of the Soul affords no Relief from the Difficulties which the Notion of a Self-determining Power in the Will is attended with, nor will it help, in the least, it's Absurdities and Inconsistences.

Section V.

Shewing, that if the Things asserted in these Evasions should be supposed to be true, they are altogether impertinent, and can't help the Cause of Arminian *Liberty; And how (this being the State of the Case)* Arminian *Writers are obliged to talk inconsistently.*

WHAT was last observed in the preceeding Section may shew, not only that the active Nature of the Soul can't be a Reason why any Act of the Will is, or why it is in this Manner, rather than another; but also that if it could be so, and it could be proved that Volitions are contingent Events, in that Sense, that their Being and Manner of Being is not fix'd or determined by any Cause, or any Thing antecedent; it would not at all serve the Purpose of *Arminians*, to establish the Freedom of the Will, according to their Notion of it's Freedom, as consisting in the Will's *Determination of it's self*; which supposes every free Act of the Will to be determined by some Act of the Will going before to determine it; in as much as for the *Will* to determine a Thing, is the same as for the Soul to determine a Thing by *Willing*; and there is no Way that the *Will* can determine an Act of the Will, than by *willing* that Act of the Will, or, which is the same Thing, *chusing* it. So that here must be two Acts of the Will in the Case, one going before another, one conversant about the other, and the latter the Object of the former, and chosen by the former.

If the Will don't cause and determine the Act by Choice, it don't cause or determine it at all; for that which is not determined by Choice, is not determined voluntarily or *willingly*: And to say, that the Will determines something which the Soul don't determine willingly, is as much as to say, that something is done by the Will, which the Soul don't do with it's Will.

So that if *Arminian* Liberty of Will, consisting in the Will's determining it's own Acts, be maintained, the old Absurdity and Contradiction must be maintained, that every free Act of Will is caused and determined by a foregoing free Act of Will. Which don't consist with the free Act's arising without any Cause, and being so contingent, as not be fix'd by any Thing fore-going. So that this Evasion must be given up, as not at all relieving, and as that which, instead of supporting this Sort of Liberty, directly destroys it.

And if it should be supposed, that the Soul determines it's own Acts of Will some other Way, than by a foregoing Act of Will; still it will not help the Cause of their Liberty of Will. If it determines them by an Act of the Understanding, or some other Power, then *the Will* don't determine *it self*; and so the *Self-determining* Power of the Will is given up. And what Liberty is there exercised, according to their own Opinion of Liberty, by the Soul's being determined by something besides *it's own Choice?* The Acts of the Will, it is true, may be directed, and effectually determined and fix'd; but it is not done by the Soul's own Will and Pleasure: There is no Exercise at all of Choice or Will in producing the Effect: And if *Will* and Choice are not exercised in it, how is the *Liberty of the Will* exercised in it?

So that let *Arminians* turn which Way they please with their Notion of Liberty, consisting in the Will's determining it's own Acts, their Notion destroys it self. If they hold every free Act of Will to be determined by the Soul's own free Choice, or foregoing free Act of Will; *foregoing*, either in the Order of Time, or Nature; It implies that gross Contradiction, that the first free Act belonging to the Affair, is determined by a free Act which is before it. Or if they say that the free Acts of the Will are determined by some *other Act* of the Soul, and not an Act of Will or Choice, This also destroys their Notion of Liberty, consisting in the Acts of the Will being determined by the *Will it self*; Or

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if they hold that the Acts of the Will are determined by *Nothing at all* that is prior to them, but that they are contingent in that Sense, that they are determined and fixed by no Cause at all; this also destroys their Notion of Liberty, consisting in the Will's determining it's own Acts.

This being the true State of the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty, it hence comes to pass, that the Writers that defend it are forced into gross Inconsistences, in what they say upon this Subject. To instance in Dr. *Whitby*; he in his Discourse on the Freedom of the Will, * opposes the Opinion of the *Calvinists*, who place Man's Liberty *only in a Power of doing what He will*, as that wherein they plainly agree with Mr. *Hobbes*. And yet he himself mentions the very same Notion of Liberty, as the Dictate of *the Sense and common Reason of Mankind, and a Rule laid down by the Light of Nature*; viz. That *Liberty is a Power of acting from our Selves, or DOING WHAT WE WILL*. † This is indeed, as he says, a Thing agreeable to *the Sense and common Reason of Mankind*; and therefore 'tis not so much to be wondered at, that he unawares acknowledges it against himself: For if Liberty don't consist in this, what else can be devised that it should consist in? If it be said, as Dr. *Whitby* elsewhere insists, That it don't only consist in Liberty of *doing what we will*, but also a Liberty of willing without Necessity; still the Question returns, What does that Liberty of willing without Necessity consist in, but in a Power of willing *as we please*, without being impeded by a contrary Necessity? or in other Words, A Liberty for the Soul in it's willing to act *according to it's own Choice?* Yea, this very Thing the same Author seems to allow, and supposes again and again, in the Use he makes of Sayings of the Fathers, whom he quotes as his Vouchers. Thus he cites these Words of *Origen*, which he produces as a Testimony on his Side; ‖ *The Soul acts By HER OWN CHOICE, and it is free for her to incline to whatever Part SHE WILL*. And those Words of *Justin Martyr*; ‡ *The Doctrine of the Christians is this, That Nothing is done or suffered according to Fate, but that every Man doth Good or Evil ACCORDING TO HIS OWN FREE CHOICE*. And from *Eusebius*, these Words; † *If Fate be establish'd, Philosophy and Piety are overthrown. --- All these Things depending upon the Necessity introduced by the Stars, and*

* In his Book on the five Points, 2d *Edit.* P. 350, 351, 352.
† *Ibid.* P. 325, 326. ‖ *Ibid.* P. 342. ‡ *Ibid.* P. 360. † *Ibid.* P. 363.

and not upon Meditation and Exercise PROCEEDING FROM OUR OWN FREE CHOICE. And again, the Words of *Macarius*, ‖ *God, to preserve the Liberty of Man's Will, suffered their Bodies to die, that it might be IN THEIR CHOICE to turn to Good or Evil.---They who are acted by the Holy Spirit, are not held under any Necessity, but have Liberty to turn themselves, and DO WHAT THEY WILL in this Life.*

Thus, the Doctor in Effect comes into that very Notion of Liberty, which the *Calvinists* have; which he at the same Time condemns, as agreeing with the Opinion of Mr. *Hobbes*, namely, *the Soul's Acting by it's own Choice, Men's doing Good or Evil according to their own free Choice, Their being in that Exercise which proceeds from their own free Choice, Having it in their Choice to turn to Good or Evil, and doing what they will.* So that if Men exercise this Liberty in the Acts of the Will themselves, it must be in exerting Acts of Will as they will, or *according to their own* free *Choice*; or exerting Acts of Will *that proceed from their Choice.* And if it be so, then let every one judge whether this don't suppose a free Choice going before the free Act of Will, or whether an Act of Choice don't go before that Act of the Will which *proceeds from it.* And if it be thus with all free Acts of the Will, then let every one judge, whether it won't follow that there is a free Choice or Will going before the first free Act of the Will exerted in the Case. And then let every one judge, whether this be not a Contradiction. And finally, let every one judge whether in the Scheme of these Writers there be any Possibility of avoiding these Absurdities.

If Liberty consists, as Dr. *Whitby* himself says, in a Man's *doing what He will*; and a Man exercises this Liberty, not only in external Actions, but in the Acts of the Will themselves; then so far as Liberty is exercised in the latter, it consists in *willing what he wills*: And if any say so, one of these two Things must be meant, either 1. That a Man has Power to Will, as he does will; because what he wills, he wills; and therefore has Power to will what he has Power to will. If this be their Meaning, then all this mighty Controversy about Freedom of the Will and Self-determining Power, comes wholly to Nothing; all that is contended for being no more than this, That the Mind of Man does what it does, and is the Subject of what it is the Subject of, or

‡ *Ibid.* 369, 370.

or that what is, is; wherein None has any Controverſy with them. Or, 2. The Meaning muſt be, that a Man has Power to will as he pleaſes or chuſes to will: That is, he has Power by one Act of Choice, to chuſe another; by an antecedent Act of Will to chuſe a conſequent Act; and therein to execute his own Choice. And if this be their Meaning, it is Nothing but Shuffling with thoſe they diſpute with, and baffling their own Reaſon. For ſtill the Queſtion returns, wherein lies Man's Liberty in that antecedent Act of Will which choſe the conſequent Act. The Anſwer according to the ſame Principles muſt be, that his Liberty in this alſo lies in his willing as he would, or as he choſe, or agreable to another Act of Choice preceeding that. And ſo the Queſtion returns *in infinitum*, and the like Anſwer muſt be made *in infinitum*: In order to ſupport their Opinion, there muſt be no Beginning, but free Acts of Will muſt have been choſen by foregoing free Acts of Will, in the Soul of every Man, without Beginning; and ſo before he had a Being, from all Eternity.

Section VI.

Concerning the Will's determining in Things which are perfectly indifferent, *in the View of the Mind.*

A Great Argument for Self-determining Power, is the ſuppoſed Experience we univerſally have of an Ability to determine our Wills, in Caſes wherein no prevailing Motive is preſented: The Will (as is ſuppoſed) has it's Choice to make between two or more Things, that are perfectly equal in the View of the Mind; and the Will is apparently altogether indifferent; and yet we find no Difficulty in coming to a Choice; the Will can inſtantly determine it ſelf to one, by a ſovereign Power which it has over it ſelf, without being moved by any preponderating Inducement.

Thus

Thus the forementioned Author of an *Eſſay on the Freedom of the Will* &c. P. 25, 26, 27, ſuppoſes, "That there are "many Inſtances, wherein the Will is determined neither "by preſent Uneaſineſs, nor by the greateſt apparent Good, "nor by the laſt Dictate of the Underſtanding, nor by "any Thing elſe, but meerly by it ſelf, as a Sovereign Self-"determining Power of the Soul; and that the Soul does "not will this or that Action, in ſome Caſes, by any other "Influence, but becauſe it will. Thus (ſays he) I can turn "my Face to the South, or the North; I can point with my "Finger upward, or downward.---- And thus, in ſome Ca-"ſes, the Will determines it ſelf in a very ſovereign Man-"ner, becauſe it will, without a Reaſon borrowed from the "Underſtanding: and hereby it diſcovers it's own perfect "Power of Choice, riſing from within it ſelf, and free from "all Influence or Reſtraint of any Kind." And in Pages 66, 70, & 73, 74. This Author very expreſly ſuppoſes the Will in many Caſes to be determined by *no Motive at all, and acts altogether without Motive, or Ground of Preference.* --- Here I would obſerve,

1. The very Suppoſition which is here made, directly contradicts and overthrows it ſelf. For the Thing ſuppoſed, wherein this grand Argument conſiſts, is, That among ſeveral Things the Will actually chuſes one before another, at the ſame Time that it is perfectly indifferent; which is the very ſame Thing as to ſay, the Mind has a Preference, at the ſame Time that it has no Preference. What is meant can't be, that the Mind is indifferent before it comes to have a Choice, or 'till it has a Preference; or, which is the ſame Thing, that the Mind is indifferent until it comes to be not indifferent. For certainly this Author did not ſuppoſe he had a Controverſy with any Perſon in ſuppoſing this. And then it is Nothing to his Purpoſe, that the Mind which chuſes, was indifferent once; unleſs it chuſes, remaining indifferent; for otherwiſe, it don't chuſe at all in that Caſe of Indifference, concerning which is all the Queſtion. Beſides, it appears in Fact, that the Thing which this Author ſuppoſes, is not that the Will chuſes one Thing before another, concerning which it is indifferent *before it chuſes*; but alſo is indifferent *when* it *chuſes*; and that it's being otherwiſe than indifferent is not 'till afterwards, in Conſequence of it's Choice; that the choſen Thing's appearing preferable and more agreable than another, ariſes from it's Choice already made. His Words are (P. 30.) "Where the Ob-

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" jects which are propoſed, appear equally fit or good, the " Will is left without a Guide or Director ; and therefore " muſt make it's own Choice, by it's own Determination ; it " being properly a Self-determining Power. And in ſuch " Caſes the Will does as it were make a Good to it ſelf by it's " own Choice, *i. e.* creates it's own Pleaſure or Delight " in this Self-choſen Good. Even as a Man by ſeizing " upon a Spot of unoccupied Land, in an uninhabited " Country, makes it his own Poſſeſſion and Property, and " as ſuch rejoyces in it. Where Things were indifferent " before, the Will finds Nothing to make them more agrea- " ble, conſidered meerly in themſelves ; but the Pleaſure it " feels ARISING FROM IT'S OWN CHOICE, and it's " Perſeverance therein. We love many Things which we " have choſen, AND PURELY BECAUSE WE CHOSE " THEM."

This is as much as to ſay, that we firſt begin to prefer many Things, now ceaſing any longer to be indifferent with Reſpect to them, purely becauſe we have prefer'd and choſen them before.----Theſe Things muſt needs be ſpoken inconſiderately by this Author. Choice or Preference can't be before it ſelf, in the ſame Inſtance, either in the Order of Time or Nature : It can't be the Foundation of it ſelf, or the Fruit or Conſequence of it ſelf. The very Act of chuſing one Thing *rather than another*, is *preferring* that Thing, and that is ſetting a higher Value on that Thing. But that the Mind ſets an higher Value on one Thing than another, is not, in the firſt Place, the Fruit of it's ſetting a higher Value on that Thing.

This Author ſays, P. 36. " The Will may be perfectly in- " different, and yet the Will may determine it ſelf to chuſe " one or the other." And again in the ſame Page, " I am " entirely indifferent to either ; and yet my Will may de- " termine it ſelf to chuſe." And again, "Which I ſhall chuſe " muſt be determined by the meer Act of my Will." If the Choice is determined by a meer Act of Will, then the Choice is determined by a meer Act of Choice. And concerning this Matter, *viz.* that the Act of the Will it ſelf is determined by an Act of Choice, this Writer is expreſs, in P. 72. Speaking of the Caſe, where there is no ſuperiour Fitneſs in Objects preſented, he has theſe Words : " There it " muſt act by it's own CHOICE, and determine it ſelf as it PLEASES." Where it is ſuppoſed that the very *Determination*,

mination, which is the Ground and Spring of the Will's Act, is an Act of *Choice* and *Pleasure*, wherein one Act is more agreable, and the Mind better pleased in it than another; and this *Preference*, and *superiour Pleasedness* is the Ground of all it does in the Case. And if so, the Mind is not indifferent when it determines it self, but *had rather* do one Thing than another, had rather determine it self one Way than another. And therefore the Will don't act at all in Indifference; not so much as in the first Step it takes, or the first Rise and Beginning of it's acting. If it be possible for the Understanding to act in Indifference, yet to be sure the Will never does; because the Will's beginning to act is the very same Thing as it's beginning to chuse or prefer. And if in the very first Act of the Will, the Mind prefers something, then the Idea of that Thing prefer'd, does at that Time preponderate, or prevail in the Mind; or, which is the same Thing, the Idea of it has a prevailing Influence on the Will. So that this wholly destroys the Thing supposed, *viz.* That the Mind can by a sovereign Power chuse one of two or more Things, which in the View of the Mind are, in every Respect, perfectly equal, one of which does not at all preponderate, nor has any prevailing Influence on the Mind above another.

So that this Author, in his grand Argument for the Ability of the Will to chuse one of two, or more Things, concerning which it is perfectly indifferent, does at the same Time, in Effect, deny the Thing he supposes, and allows and asserts the Point he endeavours to overthrow; even that the Will, in chusing, is subject to no prevailing Influence of the Idea, or View of the Thing chosen. And indeed it is impossible to offer this Argument without overthrowing it; the Thing supposed in it being inconsistent with it self, and that which denies it self. To suppose the Will to act at all in a State of perfect Indifference, either to determine it self, or to do any Thing else, is to assert that the Mind chuses without chusing. To say that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleases, is to say that it can follow it's Pleasure, when it has no Pleasure to follow. And therefore if there be any Difficulty in the Instances of two Cakes, or two Eggs &c. which are exactly alike, one as good as another; concerning which this Author supposes the Mind in Fact has a *Choice*, and so in Effect supposes that it has a *Preference*; it as much concern'd Himself to solve the Difficulty, as it does those whom he opposes. For if these Instances prove

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any Thing to his Purpose, they prove that a Man chuses without Choice. And yet this is not to his Purpose; because if this is what he asserts, his own Words are as much against him, and do as much contradict him, as the Words of those he disputes against can do.

2. There is no great Difficulty in shewing, in such Instances as are alledged, not only *that it must needs be so*, that the Mind must be influenced in it's Choice by something that has a preponderating Influence upon it, but also *how it is so*. A little Attention to our own Experience, and a distinct Consideration of the Acts of our own Minds in such Cases, will be sufficient to clear up the Matter.

Thus, supposing I have a Chess-board before me; and because I am required by a Superiour, or desired by a Friend, or to make some Experiment concerning my own Ability and Liberty, or on some other Consideration, I am determined to touch some one of the Spots or Squares on the Board with my Finger; not being limited or directed in the first Proposal, or my own first Purpose, which is general, to any one in particular; and there being nothing in the Squares in themselves considered, that recommends any one of all the sixty four, more than another: In this Case, my Mind determines to give it self up to what is vulgarly called *Accident*, † by determining to touch that Square which happens to be most in View, which my Eye is especially upon at that Moment, or which happens to be then most in my Mind, or which I shall be directed to by some other such-like Accident. Here are several Steps of the Mind's proceeding (tho' all may be done as it were in a Moment) the *first* Step is it's *general* Determination that it will touch one of the Squares. The *next* Step is another *general* Determination to give it self up to Accident, in some certain Way; as to touch that which shall be most in the Eye or Mind at that Time, or to some other such-like Accident. The *third* and last Step is a *particular* Determination to touch a certain individual Spot, even that Square, which, by that Sort of Accident the Mind

† I have elsewhere observed what that is which is vulgarly called *Accident*; That it is Nothing akin to the *Arminian* metaphysical Notion of *Contingence*, something not connected with any Thing foregoing; But that it is something that comes to pass in the Course of Things, in some Affair that Men are concerned in, unforeseen, and not owing to their Design.

has pitched upon, has actually offered it self beyond others. Now 'tis apparent that in none of these several Steps does the Mind proceed in absolute Indifference, but in each of them is influenced by a preponderating Inducement. So it is in the *first* Step; The Mind's general Determination to touch one of the sixty four Spots: The Mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it does so or no: It is induced to it, for the Sake of making some Experiment, or by the Desire of a Friend, or some other Motive that prevails. So it is in the *second* Step, The Mind's determining to give it self up to Accident, by touching that which shall be most in the Eye, or the Idea of which shall be most prevalent in the Mind &c. The Mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it proceeds by this Rule or no; but chuses it, because it appears at that Time a convenient and requisite Expedient in order to fulfil the general Purpose aforesaid. And so it is in the *third* and last Step, It's determining to touch that individual Spot which actually does prevail in the Mind's View. The Mind is not indifferent concerning this; but is influenced by a prevailing Inducement and Reason; which is, that this is a Prosecution of the preceeding Determination, which appeared requisite, and was fix'd before in the second Step.

Accident will ever serve a Man, without hindring him a Moment, in such a Case. It will always be so among a Number of Objects in View, one will prevail in the Eye, or in Idea beyond others. When we have our Eyes open in the clear Sun-shine, many Objects strike the Eye at once, and innumerable Images may be at once painted in it by the Rays of Light; but the Attention of the Mind is not equal to several of them at once; or if it be, it don't continue so for any Time. And so it is with Respect to the Ideas of the Mind in general: Several Ideas are not in equal Strength in the Mind's View and Notice at once; or at least, don't remain so for any sensible Continuance. There is nothing in the World more constantly varying, than the Ideas of the Mind: They don't remain precisely in the same State for the least perceivable Space of Time: as is evident by this, That all perceivable Time is judged and perceived by the Mind only by the Succession or the successive Changes of it's own Ideas. Therefore while the Views or Perceptions of the Mind remain precisely in the same State, there is no perceivable Space or Length of Time, because no sensible Succession at all.

As

As the Acts of the Will, in each Step of the fore-mentioned Proceedure, don't come to pass without a particular Cause, every Act is owing to a prevailing Inducement; so the Accident, as I have called it, or that which happens in the unsearchable Course of Things, to which the Mind yields it self, and by which it is guided, is not any Thing that comes to pass without a Cause; and the Mind in determining to be guided by it, is not determined by something that has no Cause; any more than if it determined to be guided by a Lot, or the casting of a Die. For tho' the Die's falling in such a Manner be accidental to him that casts it, yet none will suppose that there is no Cause why it falls as it does. The involuntary Changes in the Succession of our Ideas, tho' the Cause may not be observed, have as much a Cause, as the changeable Motions of the Motes that float in the Air, or the continual, infinitely various, successive Changes of the Unevennesses on the Surface of the Water.

There are two Things especially, which are probably the Occasions of Confusion in the Minds of them who insist upon it, that the Will acts in a proper Indifference, and without being moved by any Inducement, in it's Determinations in such Cases as have been mentioned.

1. They seem to mistake the Point in Question, or at least not to keep it distinctly in View. The Question they dispute about, is, Whether the Mind be indifferent about the *Objects* presented, one of which is to be taken, touch'd, pointed to &c. as two Eggs, two Cakes, which appear equally good. Whereas the Question to be considered, is, Whether the Person be indifferent with Respect to his own *Actions*; whether he don't, on some Consideration or other, prefer one Act with Respect to these Objects before another. The Mind in it's Determination and Choice, in these Cases, is not most immediately and directly conversant about the *Objects presented*; but *the Acts to be done* concerning these Objects. The Objects may appear equal, and the Mind may never properly make any Choice between them: But the next Act of the Will being about the external Actions to be performed, Taking, Touching &c. these may not appear equal, and one Action may properly be chosen before another. In each Step of the Mind's Progress, the Determination is not about the Objects, unless indirectly and improperly, but about the Actions, which it chuses for other Reasons than any Preference of the Objects, and for Reasons not taken at all from the Objects.

There

There is no Neceſſity of ſuppoſing, that the Mind does ever at all properly chuſe one of the Objects before another; either before it has taken, or afterwards. Indeed the Man chuſes to *take* or *touch* one rather than another; but not becauſe it chuſes the *Thing taken*, or *touch'd*; but from foreign Conſiderations. The Caſe may be ſo, that of two Things offered, a Man may, for certain Reaſons, chuſe and prefer the taking of that which he *undervalues*, and chuſe to neglect to take that which his Mind *prefers*. In ſuch a Caſe, chuſing the Thing taken, and chuſing to take, are diverſe: and ſo they are in a Caſe where the Things preſented are equal in the Mind's Eſteem, and neither of them preferred. All that Fact and Experience makes evident, is, that the Mind chuſes one Action rather than another. And therefore the Arguments which they bring, in order to be to their Purpoſe, ought to be to prove that the Mind chuſes the Action in perfect Indifference, with Reſpect to *that Action*; and not to prove that the Mind chuſes the Action in perfect Indifference with Reſpect to the *Object*; which is very poſſible, and yet the Will not act at all without prevalent Inducement, and proper Preponderation.

2. Another Reaſon of Confuſion and Difficulty in this Matter, ſeems to be, not diſtinguiſhing between a *general* Indifference, or an Indifference with Reſpect to what is to be done in a more diſtant and general View of it, and a *particular* Indifference, or an Indifference with Reſpect to the next immediate Act, view'd with it's particular and preſent Circumſtances. A Man may be perfectly indifferent with Reſpect to his own *Actions*, in the former Reſpect; and yet not in the latter. Thus, in the foregoing Inſtance of touching one of the Squares of a Cheſs-board; when 'tis firſt propoſed that I ſhould touch one of them, I may be perfectly indifferent which I touch; becauſe as yet I view the Matter remotely and generally, being but in the firſt Step of the Mind's Progreſs in the Affair. But yet, when I am actually come to the laſt Step, and the very next Thing to be determined is, which is to be touch'd, having already determined that I will touch that which happens to be moſt in my Eye or Mind, and my Mind being now fix'd on a particular one, the Act of touching that, conſidered thus immediately, and in theſe particular preſent Circumſtances, is not what my Mind is abſolutely indifferent about.

Section VII.

Concerning the Notion of Liberty of Will *consisting in* Indifference.

WHAT has been said in the foregoing Section, has a Tendency in some Measure to evince the Absurdity of the Opinion of such as place Liberty in Indifference, or in that Equilibrium whereby the Will is without all antecedent Determination or Bias, and left hitherto free from any prepossessing Inclination to one Side or the other; that the Determination of the Will to either Side may be entirely from it self, and that it may be owing only to it's own Power, and that Sovereignty which it has over it self, that it goes this Way rather than that. ‖

But in as much as this has been of such long standing, and has been so generally received, and so much insisted on by *Pelagians*, *Semi-Pelagians*, *Jesuits*, *Socinians*, *Arminians*, and others, it may deserve a more full Consideration. And therefore I shall now proceed to a more particular and thorough Enquiry into this Notion.

But

‖ Dr. *Whitby*, and some other *Arminians*, make a Distinction of different Kinds of Freedom; one of God, and perfect Spirits above: another of Persons in a State of Trial. The former Dr. *Whitby* allows to consist with Necessity; the latter he holds to be without Necessity: And this latter he supposes to be requisite to our being the Subjects of Praise or Dispraise, Rewards or Punishments, Precepts and Prohibitions, Promises and Threats, Exhortations and Dehortations, and a Covenant-Treaty. And to this Freedom he supposes *Indifference* to be requisite. In his Discourse on the five Points, P. 299, 300, he says; "It is a Freedom (speaking of a Free-"dom not only from Co-action, but from Necessity) requisite, as we "conceive, to render us capable of Trial or Probation, and to "render our Actions worthy of Praise or Dispraise, and our Per-"sons of Rewards or Punishments." And in the next Page, speaking of the same Matter, He says, "Excellent to this Purpose, "are the Words of Mr. *Thorndike*: *We say not, that Indifference is* "*requisite to all Freedom, but to the Freedom of Man alone in this* "*State of Travail and Proficience: the Ground of which is God's Ten-*"*der of a Treaty, and Conditions of Peace and Reconcilement to fallen* "*Man, together with those Precepts and Prohibitions, those Promises* "*and Threats, those Exhortations & Dehortations, it is enforced with.*"

Now leſt ſome ſhould ſuppoſe that I don't underſtand thoſe that place Liberty in Indifference, or ſhould charge me with miſrepreſenting their Opinion, I would ſignify, that I am ſenſible, there are ſome, who when they talk of the Liberty of the Will as conſiſting in Indifference, expreſs themſelves as tho' they would not be underſtood of the Indifference of the Inclination or Tendency of the Will, but of, I know not what, Indifference of the Soul's Power of Willing; or that the Will, with Reſpect to it's Power or Ability to chuſe, is indifferent, can go either Way indifferently, either to the right Hand or left, either act or forbear to act, one as well as the other. Tho' this ſeems to be a Refining only of ſome particular Writers, and newly invented, and which will by no Means conſiſt with the Manner of Expreſſion uſed by the Defenders of Liberty of Indifference in general. And I wiſh ſuch Refiners would thoroughly conſider, whether they diſtinctly know their own Meaning, when they make a Diſtinction between Indifference of the Soul as to it's *Power* or *Ability* of Willing or Chuſing, and the Soul's Indifference as to the Preference or Choice it ſelf; and whether they don't deceive themſelves in imagining that they have any diſtinct Meaning at all. The Indifference of the Soul as to it's Ability or Power to Will, muſt be the ſame Thing as the Indifference of the State of the Power or Faculty of the Will, or the Indifference of the State which the Soul it ſelf, which has that Power or Faculty, hitherto remains in, as to the Exerciſe of that Power, in the Choice it ſhall by and by make.

But not to inſiſt any longer on the Abſtruſeneſs and Inexplicableneſs of this Diſtinction; let what will be ſuppoſed concerning the Meaning of them that make Uſe of it, thus much muſt at leaſt be intended by *Arminians*, when they talk of Indifference as eſſential to Liberty of Will, if they intend any Thing, in any Reſpect to their Purpoſe, *viz.* That it is ſuch an Indifference as leaves the Will not determined already; but free from actual Poſſeſſion, and vacant of Predetermination, ſo far, that there may be Room for the Exerciſe of the *Self-determining Power* of the Will; and that the Will's Freedom conſiſts in, or depends upon this Vacancy and Opportunity that is left for the Will it ſelf to be the Determiner of the Act that is to be the free Act.

And

And here I would obſerve in the *firſt* Place, that to make out this Scheme of Liberty, the Indifference muſt be *perfect* and *abſolute*; there muſt be a perfect Freedom from all antecedent Preponderation or Inclination. Becauſe if the Will be already inclined, before it exerts it's own ſovereign Power on it ſelf, then it's Inclination is not wholly owing to it ſelf: If when two Oppoſites are propoſed to the Soul for it's Choice, the Propoſal don't find the Soul wholly in a State of Indifference, then it is not found in a State of Liberty for meer Self-determination. ---- The leaſt Degree of antecedent Bias muſt be inconſiſtent with their Notion of Liberty. For ſo long as prior Inclination poſſeſſes the Will, and is not removed, it binds the Will, ſo that it is utterly impoſſible that the Will ſhould act otherwiſe than agreably to it. Surely the Will can't act or chuſe contrary to a remaining prevailing Inclination of the Will. To ſuppoſe otherwiſe, would be the ſame Thing as to ſuppoſe, that the Will is *inclined* contrary to it's preſent prevailing *Inclination*, or contrary to what it is *inclined* to. That which the Will chuſes and prefers, that, all Things conſidered, it preponderates and inclines to. It is equally impoſſible for the Will to chuſe contrary to it's own remaining and preſent preponderating Inclination, as 'tis to *prefer* contrary to it's own preſent *Preference*, or *chuſe* contrary to it's own preſent *Choice*. The Will therefore, ſo long as it is under the Influence of an old preponderating Inclination, is not at Liberty for a new free Act, or any Act that ſhall now be an Act of Self-determination. The Act which is a Self-determin'd free Act, muſt be an Act which the Will determines in the Poſſeſſion and Uſe of ſuch a Liberty, as conſiſts in a Freedom from every Thing, which, if it were there, would make it impoſſible that the Will, at that Time, ſhould be otherwiſe than that Way to which it tends.

If any one ſhould ſay, there is no Need that the Indifference ſhould be perfect; but altho' a former Inclination and Preference ſtill remains, yet, if it ben't very ſtrong and violent, poſſibly the Strength of the Will may oppoſe and overcome it :-----

This is groſly abſur'd; for the Strength of the Will, let it be never ſo great, does not at all enable it to act one Way, and not the contrary Way, both at the ſame Time. It gives it no ſuch Sovereignty and Command, as to cauſe it

ſelf to prefer and not to prefer at the ſame Time, or to chuſe contrary to it's own preſent Choice.

Therefore, if there be the leaſt Degree of antecedent Preponderation of the Will, it muſt be perfectly aboliſhed, before the Will can be at Liberty to determine it ſelf the contrary Way. And if the Will determines it ſelf the ſame Way, it was not a *free Determination*, becauſe the Will is not wholly at Liberty in ſo doing: It's Determination is not altogether *from it ſelf*, but it was partly determined before, in it's prior Inclination: And all the Freedom the Will exerciſes in the Caſe, is in an Increaſe of Inclination, which it gives it ſelf, over and above what it had by foregoing Bias; ſo much is from it ſelf, and ſo much is from perfect Indifference. For tho' the Will had a previous Tendency that Way, yet as to that additional Degree of Inclination, it had no Tendency. Therefore the previous Tendency is of no Conſideration, with Reſpect to the Act wherein the Will is free. So that it comes to the ſame Thing which was ſaid at firſt, that as to the Act of the Will, wherein the Will is free, there muſt be *perfect Indifference*, or *Equilibrium*.

To illuſtrate this; If we ſhould ſuppoſe a ſovereign Self-moving Power in a natural Body: But that the Body is in Motion already, by an antecedent Bias; for Inſtance, Gravitation towards the Center of the Earth; and has one Degree of Motion already, by Vertue of that previous Tendency; but by it's ſelf-moving Power it adds one Degree more to it's Motion, and moves ſo much more ſwiftly towards the Center of the Earth than it would do by it's Gravity only: It is evident, that all that is owing to a ſelf-moving Power in this Caſe, is the additional Degree of Motion; and that the other Degree of Motion which it had from Gravity, is of no Conſideration in the Caſe, don't help the Effect of the free ſelf-moving Power in the leaſt; the Effect is juſt the ſame, as if the Body had received from it ſelf one Degree of Motion from a State of perfect Reſt. So if we ſhould ſuppoſe a ſelf-moving Power given to the Scale of a Balance, which has a Weight of one Degree beyond the oppoſite Scale; and we aſcribe to it an Ability to add to it ſelf another Degree of Force the ſame Way, by it's ſelf-moving Power; This is juſt the ſame Thing as to aſcribe to it a Power to give it ſelf one Degree of Preponderation from a perfect Equilibrium; and ſo much Power as the

Scale

Scale has to give it self an Over-balance from a perfect Equipoise, so much self-moving self-preponderating Power it has, and no more. So that it's free Power this Way is always to be measured from perfect Equilibrium.

I need say no more to prove, that, if Indifference be essential to Liberty, it must be perfect Indifference; and that so far as the Will is destitute of this, so far it is destitute of that Freedom by which it is it's own Master, and in a Capacity of being it's own Determiner, without being at all passive, or subject to the Power and Sway of something else, in it's Motions and Determinations.

Having observed these Things, let us now try whether this Notion of the Liberty of Will consisting in Indifference and Equilibrium, and the Will's Self-determination in such a State, be not absurd and inconsistent.

And here I would lay down this as an Axiom of undoubted Truth; *That every free Act is done in a State of Freedom, and not only after such a State.* If an Act of the Will be an Act wherein the Soul is free, it must be exerted in a *State of Freedom*, and in the *Time of Freedom*. It will not suffice, that the Act immediately follows a State of Liberty; but Liberty must yet continue, and co-exist with the Act; the Soul remaining in Possession of Liberty. Because that is the Notion of a free Act of the Soul, even an Act wherein the Soul *uses* or *exercises Liberty*. But if the Soul is not, in the very Time of the Act, in the *Possession* of Liberty, it can't at that Time be in the *Use* of it.

Now the Question is, whether ever the Soul of Man puts forth any Act of Will, while it yet remains in a State of Liberty, in that Notion of a State of Liberty, *viz.* as implying a State of Indifference; or whether the Soul ever exerts an Act of Choice or Preference, while at that very Time the Will is in a perfect Equilibrium, not inclining one Way more than another. The very putting of the Question is sufficient to shew the Absurdity of the affirmative Answer: For how ridiculous would it be for any Body to insist, that the Soul chuses one Thing before another, when at the very same Instant it is perfectly indifferent with Respect to each! This is the same Thing as to say, the Soul prefers one Thing to another, at the very same Time that it has no Preference.---- Choice and Preference can no more be in a

State of Indifference, than Motion can be in a State of Reſt, or than the Preponderation of the Scale of a Balance can be in a State of Equilibrium, Motion may be the next Moment afterReſt ; but can't co-exiſt with it,in *any*,even the *leaſt*Part of it. So Choice may be immediately after aState of Indifference, but has no Co-exiſtence with it : Even the very Beginning of it is not in a State of Indifference. And therefore if this be Liberty, no Act of the Will, in any Degree, is ever performed in a State of Liberty, or in the Time of Liberty. Volition and Liberty are ſo far from agreeing together, and being eſſential one to another, that they are contrary one to another, and one excludes and deſtroys the other, as much as Motion and Reſt, Light and Darkneſs, or Life & Death. So that the Will acts not at all, does not ſo much as begin to act in the Time of ſuch Liberty : Freedom is perfectly at an End, and has ceaſed to be, at the firſt Moment of Action ; and therefore Liberty can't reach the Action, to affect, or qualify it, or give it a Denomination, or any Part of it, any more than if it had ceaſed to be twenty Years before the Action began. The Moment that Liberty ceaſes to be, it ceaſes to be a Qualification of any Thing. If Light and Darkneſs ſucceed one another inſtantaneouſly, Light qualifies Nothing after it is gone out, to make any thing lightſome or bright, any more at the firſt Moment of perfect Darkneſs, than Months or Years after. Life denominates Nothing *vital* at the firſt Moment of perfect Death. So Freedom, if it conſiſts in, or implies Indifference, can denominate Nothing free, at the firſt Moment of Preference or Preponderation. Therefore 'tis manifeſt, that no Liberty which the Soul is poſſeſſed of, or ever uſes, in any of it's Acts of Volition, conſiſts in Indifference ; and that the Opinion of ſuch as ſuppoſe, that Indifference belongs to the very Eſſence of Liberty, is to the higheſt Degree abſurd and contradictory.

If any one ſhould imagine, that this Manner of arguing is Nothing but Trick and Deluſion ; and to evade the Reaſoning, ſhould ſay, that the Thing wherein the Will exerciſes it's Liberty, is not in the Act of Choice or Preponderation it ſelf, but in *determining* it ſelf to a certain Choice or Preference ; That the Act of the Will wherein it is free, and uſes it's own Sovereignty, conſiſts in it's *cauſing* or *determining* the *Change* or *Tranſition* from a State of Indifference to a certain Preference, or determining to give a certain Turn to the Balance, which has hitherto been even ; and that this Act the Will exerts in a State of Liberty, or while the Will yet remains in Equilibrium, and perfect Maſter of

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it self :---- I say, if any One chuses to express his Notion of Liberty after this, or some such Manner, let us see if he can make out his Matters any better than before.

What is asserted is, that the Will, while it yet remains in perfect Equilibrium, without Preference, determines to change it self from that State, and excite in it self a certain Choice or Preference. Now let us see whether this don't come to the same Absurdity we had before. If it be so, that the Will, while it yet remains perfectly Indifferent, determines to put it self out of that State, and give it self a certain Preponderation ; Then I would enquire, whether the Soul don't determine this of Choice ; or whether the Will's coming to a Determination to do so, be not the same Thing as the Soul's coming to a Choice to do so. If the Soul don't determine this of Choice, or in the Exercise of Choice, then it don't determine it voluntarily. And if the Soul don't determine it voluntarily, or of it's own *Will*, then in what Sense does it's *Will* determine it ? And if the Will don't determine it, then how is the *Liberty of the Will* exercised in the Determination ? What Sort of Liberty is exercised by the Soul in those Determinations, wherein there is no exercise of Choice, which are not voluntary, and wherein the Will is not concerned ?--- But if it be allowed, that this Determination is an Act of Choice, and it be insisted on, that the Soul, while it yet remains in a State of perfect Indifference, chuses to put it self out of that State, and to turn it self one Way ; then the Soul is already come to a Choice, and chuses that Way. And so we have the very same Absurdity which we had before. Here is the Soul in a State of Choice, and in a State of Equilibrium, both at the same Time : the Soul already chusing one Way, while it remains in a State of perfect Indifference, and has no Choice of one Way more than the other.--- And indeed this Manner of talking, tho' it may a little hide the Absurdity, in the Obscurity of Expression, is more nonsensical, and increases the Inconsistence. To say, the free Act of the Will, or the Act which the Will exerts in a State of Freedom and Indifference, does not imply Preference in it, but is what the Will does in Order to causing or producing a Preference, is as much as to say, the Soul chuses (for to Will and to Chuse are the same Thing) without Choice, and prefers without Preference, in order to cause or produce the Beginning of a Preference, or the first Choice. And that is, that the first Choice is exerted without Choice, in order to produce it self.

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If any, to evade these Things, should own, that a State of Liberty, and a State of Indifference are not the same, and that the former may be without the latter; But should say, that Indifference is still *essential to* the Freedom of an Act of Will, in some Sort, namely, as 'tis necessary to go immediately *before it*; It being essential to the Freedom of an Act of Will that it should directly and immediately *arise out* of a State of Indifference: still this will not help the Cause of *Arminian* Liberty, or make it consistent with it self. For if the Act springs immediately out of a State of Indifference, then it do's not arise from *antecedent* Choice or Preference. But if the Act arises directly out of a State of Indifference, without any intervening Choice to chuse and determine it, then the Act not being determined by Choice, is not determined by the Will; the Mind exercises no free Choice in the Affair, and free Choice and free Will have no Hand in the Determination of the Act. Which is entirely inconsistent with their Notion of the Freedom of Volition.

If any should suppose, that these Difficulties and Absurdities may be avoided, by saying, that the Liberty of the Mind consists in a Power to *suspend* the Act of the Will, and so to keep it in a State of *Indifference*, 'till there has been Opportunity for Consideration; and so shall say, that however Indifference is not essential to Liberty in such a Manner, that the Mind must make it's Choice in a State of Indifference, which is an Inconsistency, or that the Act of Will must spring immediately out of Indifference; yet Indifference may be essential to the Liberty of Acts of the Will in this Respect; *viz.* That Liberty consists in a Power of the Mind to forbear or suspend the Act of Volition, and keep the Mind in a State of Indifference for the present, 'till there has been Opportunity for proper Deliberation: I say, if any one imagines that this helps the Matter, it is a great Mistake: It reconciles no Inconsistency, and relieves no Difficulty which the Affair is attended with. ---- For here the following Things must be observed,

1. That this *suspending* of Volition, if there be properly any such Thing, is it self an Act of Volition. If the Mind determines to suspend it's Act, it determines it voluntarily; it chuses, on some Consideration, to suspend it. And this Choice or Determination, is an Act of the Will: And indeed it is supposed to be so in the very Hypothesis; for 'tis supposed, that the Liberty *of the Will* consists in it's Power

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to do thus, and that it's doing it is the very Thing wherein *the Will exerciſes it's Liberty.* But how can the Will exerciſe Liberty in it, if it ben't an Act of the Will ? The Liberty of the Will is not exerciſed in any Thing but what the Will does.

2. This determining to ſuſpend acting is not only an Act of the Will, but 'tis ſuppoſed to be the only free Act of the Will ; becauſe it is ſaid, that *this is the Thing wherein the Liberty of the Will conſiſts.*---Now if this be ſo, then this is all the Act of Will that we have to conſider in this Controverſy, about the Liberty of Will, and in our Enquiries, wherein the Liberty of Man conſiſts. And now the forementioned Difficulties remain : the former Queſtion returns upon us ; *viz.* Wherein conſiſts the Freedom of the Will *in thoſe Acts* wherein it is free ? And if this Act of determining a Suſpenſion be the only Act in which the Will is free, then wherein conſiſts the Will's Freedom with Reſpect to this Act of Suſpenſion ? And how is Indifference eſſential to this Act ? The Anſwer muſt be, according to what is ſuppoſed in the Evaſion under Conſideration, That the Liberty of the Will in this Act of Suſpenſion, conſiſts in a Power to ſuſpend even this Act, 'till there has been Opportunity for thorough Deliberation. But this will be to plunge directly into the groſſeſt Nonſenſe : for 'tis the Act of Suſpenſion it ſelf that we are ſpeaking of ; and there is no Room for a Space of Deliberation and Suſpenſion, in order to determine whether we will ſuſpend or no. For that ſuppoſes, that even Suſpenſion it ſelf may be defer'd : Which is abſurd ; for the very deferring the Determination of Suſpenſion, to conſider whether we will ſuſpend or no, will be actually ſuſpending. For during the Space of Suſpenſion, to conſider whether to ſuſpend, the Act is *ipſo facto* ſuſpended. There is no Medium between ſuſpending to act, and immediately acting ; and therefore no Poſſibility of avoiding either the one or the other one Moment ; and ſo no Room for Deliberation before we do either of them.

And beſides, this is attended with ridiculous Abſurdity another Way : For now it is come to that, that Liberty conſiſts wholly in the Mind's having Power to ſuſpend it's Determination whether to ſuſpend or no ; that there may be Time for Conſideration, whether it be beſt to ſuſpend. And if Liberty conſiſts in this only, then this is the Liberty under Conſideration : We have to enquire now, how Liberty with

Reſpect

Reſpect to this Act of ſuſpending a Determination of Suſpenſion, conſiſts in Indifference, or how Indifference is eſſential to it. The Anſwer, according to the Hypotheſis we are upon, muſt be, that it conſiſts in a Power of ſuſpending even this laſt mentioned Act, to have Time to conſider whether to ſuſpend that. And then the ſame Difficulties and Enquiries return over again with Reſpect to that; and ſo on forever. Which, if it would ſhew any Thing, would ſhew only that there is no ſuch Thing as a free Act. It drives the Exerciſe of Freedom back *in infinitum*; and that is to drive it out of the World.

And beſides all this, there is a Deluſion, and a latent groſs Contradiction in the Affair another Way; in as much as in explaining how, or in what Reſpect the Will is free with Regard to a particular Act of Volition, 'tis ſaid, that it's Liberty conſiſts in a Power to determine to ſuſpend *that Act*, which places Liberty not in *that Act* of Volition which the Enquiry is about, but altogether in another antecedent Act. Which contradicts the Thing ſuppoſed in both the Queſtion and Anſwer. The Queſtion is, wherein conſiſts the Mind's Liberty *in any particular Act* of Volition? And the Anſwer, in pretending to ſhew wherein lies the Mind's Liberty *in that Act*, in Effect ſays, it don't lie in that Act at all, but in another, *viz.* a Volition *to ſuſpend that Act.* And therefore the Anſwer is both contradictory, and altogether impertinent and beſide the Purpoſe. For it don't ſhew wherein the Liberty of the Will conſiſts in the Act in Queſtion; Inſtead of that, it ſuppoſes it don't conſiſt in that Act at all, but in another diſtinct from it, even a Volition to ſuſpend that Act, and take Time to conſider of it. And no Account is pretended to be given wherein the Mind is free with Reſpect to that Act, wherein this Anſwer ſuppoſes the Liberty of the Mind indeed conſiſts, *viz.* the Act of Suſpenſion, or of determining the Suſpenſion.

On the whole, 'tis exceeding manifeſt, that the Liberty of the Mind does not conſiſt in Indifference, and that Indifference is not eſſential or neceſſary to it, or at all belonging to it, as the *Arminians* ſuppoſe; that Opinion being full of Nothing but Abſurdity and Self-Contradiction.

SECTION

Section VIII.

Concerning the ſuppoſed Liberty of the Will, as oppoſite to all Neceſſity.

'TIS a Thing chiefly inſiſted on by *Arminians*, in this Controverſy, as a Thing moſt important and eſſential in human Liberty, that Volitions, or the Acts of the Will, are *contingent* Events; underſtanding Contingence as oppoſite, not only to Conſtraint, but to all Neceſſity. Therefore I would particularly conſider this Matter. And

1. I would enquire, whether there is, or can be any ſuch Thing, as a Volition which is contingent in ſuch a Senſe, as not only to come to paſs without any Neceſſity of Conſtraint or Co-action, but alſo without a *Neceſſity of Conſequence*, or an infallible Connection with any Thing foregoing.
2. Whether, if it were ſo, this would at all help the Cauſe of Liberty.

I. I would conſider whether Volition is a Thing that ever does, or can come to paſs, in this Manner, contingently.

And here it muſt be remembred, that it has been already ſhewn, that Nothing can ever come to paſs without a Cauſe, or Reaſon why it exiſts in this Manner rather than another; and the Evidence of this has been particularly applied to the Acts of the Will. Now if this be ſo, it will demonſtrably follow, that the Acts of the Will are never contingent, or without Neceſſity, in the Senſe ſpoken of; in as much as thoſe Things which have a Cauſe, or Reaſon of their Exiſtence, muſt be connected with their Cauſe. This appears by the following Conſiderations.

1. For an Event to have a Cauſe and Ground of it's Exiſtence, and yet not to be connected with it's Cauſe, is an Inconſiſtence. For if the Event ben't connected with the Cauſe, it is not dependent on the Cauſe; it's Exiſtence is as it were looſe from it's Influence, and may attend it, or may not; it being a meer Contingence, whether it follows or attends the Influence of the Cauſe, or not: And that is the ſame Thing as not to be depen-

dent on it. And to ſay, the Event is not dependent on it's Cauſe, is abſurd : 'Tis the ſame Thing as to ſay, it is not it's Cauſe, nor the Event the Effect of it : For Dependence on the Influence of a Cauſe, is the very Notion of an Effect. If there be no ſuch Relation between one Thing and another, conſiſting in the Connection and Dependence of one Thing on the Influence of another, then it is certain there is no ſuch Relation between them as is ſignified by the Terms *Cauſe* and *Effect*. So far as an Event is dependent on a Cauſe, and connected with it, ſo much Cauſality is there in the Caſe, and no more. The Cauſe does, or brings to paſs no more in any Event, than is dependent on it. If we ſay, the Connection and Dependence is not total, but partial, and that the Effect, tho' it has ſome Connection and Dependence, yet is not entirely dependent on it ; That is the ſame Thing as to ſay, that not all that is in theEvent is an Effect of that Cauſe, but that only Part of it ariſes from thence, and Part ſome other Way.

2. If there are ſome Events which are not neceſſarily connected with their Cauſes, then it will follow, that there are ſome Things which come to paſs without any Cauſe, contrary to the Suppoſition. For if there be any Event which was not neceſſarily connected with the Influence of the Cauſe under ſuchCircumſtances,then it was contingent whether it would attend or follow theInfluence of theCauſe,or no ; It might have followed, and it might not, when the Cauſe was the ſame, it's Influence the ſame, and under the ſame Circumſtances. And if ſo, why did it follow, rather than not follow ? There is no Cauſe or Reaſon of this. Therefore here is ſomething without any Cauſe or Reaſon why it is, *viz.* the following of the Effect on the Influence of the Cauſe, with which it was not neceſſarily connected. If there be a neceſſary Connection of the Effect on any Thing antecedent, then we may ſuppoſe that ſometimes the Event will follow the Cauſe, and ſometimes not, when the Cauſe is the ſame, and in every Reſpect in the ſame State & Circumſtances. And what can be the Cauſe and Reaſon of this ſtrange Phenomenon, even this Diverſity, that in one Inſtance, the Effect ſhould follow, in another not ? 'Tis evident by the Suppoſition, that this is wholly without any Cauſe or Ground. Here is ſomething in the preſent Manner of the Exiſtence of Things, and State of the World, that is abſolutely without a Cauſe. Which is contrary to the Suppoſition, and contrary to what has been before demonſtrated.

3. To

3. To ſuppoſe there are ſome Events which have a Cauſe and Ground of their Exiſtence, that yet are not neceſſarily connected with their Cauſe, is to ſuppoſe that they have a Cauſe which is not their Cauſe. Thus; If the Effect be not neceſſarily connected with the Cauſe, with it's Influence, and influential Circumſtances; then, as I obſerved before, 'tis a Thing poſſible and ſuppoſable, that the Cauſe may ſometimes exert the ſame Influence, under the ſame Circumſtances, and yet the Effect not follow. And if this actually happens in any Inſtance, this Inſtance is a Proof, in Fact, that the Influence of the Cauſe is not ſufficient to produce the Effect. For if it had been ſufficient, it would have done it. And yet, by the Suppoſition, in another Inſtance, the ſame Cauſe, with perfectly the ſame Influence, and when all Circumſtances which have any Influence, are the ſame, it *was followed* with the Effect. By which it is manifeſt, that the Effect in this laſt Inſtance was not owing to the Influence of the Cauſe, but muſt come to paſs ſome other Way. For it was proved before, that the Influence of the Cauſe was not ſufficient to produce the Effect. And if it was not ſufficient to produce it, then the Production of it could not be owing to that Influence, but muſt be owing to ſomething elſe, or owing to Nothing. And if the Effect be not owing to the Influence of the Cauſe, then it is not the Cauſe. Which brings us to the Contradiction, of a Cauſe, and no Cauſe, that which is the Ground and Reaſon of the Exiſtence of a Thing, and at the ſame Time is not the Ground and Reaſon of it's Exiſtence, nor is ſufficient to be ſo.

If the Matter be not already ſo plain as to render any further Reaſoning upon it impertinent, I would ſay, that that which ſeems to be the Cauſe in the ſuppoſed Caſe, can be no Cauſe; it's Power and Influence having, on a full Trial, proved inſufficient to produce ſuch an Effect: and if it be not ſufficient to produce it, then it don't produce it. To ſay otherwiſe, is to ſay, there is Power to do that which there is not Power to do. If there be in a Cauſe ſufficient Power exerted, and in Circumſtances ſufficient to produce an Effect, and ſo the Effect be actually produced at *one Time*; Theſe Things all concurring, will produce the Effect at *all Times*. And ſo we may turn it the other Way; That which proves not ſufficient at one Time, cannot be ſufficient at another, with preciſely the ſame influential Circumſtances. And therefore if the Effect follows, it is not owing to that

Cauſe ; unleſs the different Time be a Circumſtance which has Influence : But that is contrary to the Suppoſition ; for 'tis ſuppoſed that all Circumſtances that have Influence, are the ſame. And beſides, this would be to ſuppoſe the Time to be the Cauſe ; which is contrary to the Suppoſition of the other Thing's being the Cauſe. But if meerly Diverſity of Time has no Influence, then 'tis evident that it is as much of an Abſurdity to ſay, the Cauſe was ſufficient to produce the Effect at one Time, and not at another ; as to ſay, that it is ſufficient to produce the Effect at a certain Time, and yet not ſufficient to produce the ſame Effect at that ſame Time.

On the whole, it is clearly manifeſt, that every Effect has a neceſſary Connection with it's Cauſe, or with that which is the true Ground and Reaſon of it's Exiſtence. And therefore if there be no Event without a Cauſe, as was proved before, then no Event whatſoever is contingent in the Manner that *Arminians* ſuppoſe the free Acts of the Will to be contingent.

Section IX.

Of the Connection *of the Acts of the Will with the Dictates of the* Underſtanding.

IT is manifeſt, that the Acts of the Will are none of them contingent in ſuch a Senſe as to be without all Neceſſity, or ſo as not to be neceſſary with a Neceſſity of Conſequence and Connection ; becauſe every Act of the Will is ſome Way connected with the Underſtanding, and is as the greateſt apparent Good is, in the Manner which has already been explained ; namely, that the Soul always wills or chuſes that which, in the preſent View of the Mind, conſidered in the whole of that View, and all that belongs to it, appears moſt agreable. Becauſe, as was obſerved before, Nothing is more evident than that, when Men act voluntarily, and do what they pleaſe, then they do what appears moſt agreable to them ; and to ſay otherwiſe, would be

be as much as to affirm, that Men don't chuse what appears to suit them best, or what seems most pleasing to them; or that they don't chuse what they prefer. Which brings the Matter to a Contradiction.

As 'tis very evident in it self, that the Acts of the Will have some Connection with the Dictates or Views of the Understanding, so this is allowed by some of the chief of the *Arminian* Writers: Particularly by Dr. *Whitby* and Dr. *Samuel Clark*.----- Dr. *Turnbull*, tho' a great Enemy to the Doctrine of Necessity, allows the same Thing. In his *Christian Philosophy* (P. 196.) He with much Approbation cites another Philosopher, as of the same Mind, in these Words: "No Man (says an excellent Philosopher) sets "himself about any Thing, but upon some View or other, "which serves him for a Reason for what he does; and "whatsoever Faculties he employs, the Understanding, with "such Light as it has, well or ill informed, constantly "leads; and by that Light, true or false, all her operative "Powers are directed. The Will it self, how absolute and "incontroulable soever it may be thought, never fails in "it's Obedience to the Dictates of the Understanding. "Temples have their sacred Images; and we see what In-"fluence they have always had over a great Part of Man-"kind; But in Truth, the Ideas and Images in Men's "Minds are the invisible Powers that constantly govern "them; and to these they all pay universally a ready Sub-"mission."

But whether this be in a just Consistence with Themselves, and their own Notions of Liberty, I desire may now be impartially considered.

Dr. *Whitby* plainly supposes, that the Acts and Determinations of the Will always follow the Understanding's Apprehension or View of the greatest Good to be obtain'd, or Evil to be avoided; or in other Words, that the Determinations of the Will constantly and infallibly follow these two Things in the Understanding: 1. The *Degree of Good* to be obtained, and Evil to be avoided, proposed to the Understanding, and apprehended, viewed, and taken Notice of by it. 2. The *Degree of the Understanding's View*, Notice or Apprehension of that Good or Evil; which is increased by Attention and Consideration. That this is an Opinion he is exceeding peremptory in (as he is in every Opinion which he maintains in his Controversy with the *Calvinists*) with Disdain,

dain of the contrary Opinion, as abſurd and ſelf-contradictory, will appear by the following Words of his, in his Diſcourſe on the five Points.*

" Now, 'tis certain, that what naturally makes the Underſtanding to perceive, is Evidence propoſed, and apprehended, conſidered or adverted to: for Nothing elſe can be requiſite to make us come to the Knowledge of the Truth.-----Again, what makes the Will chuſe, is ſomething approved by the Underſtanding; and conſequently appearing to the Soul as Good. And whatſoever it refuſeth, is ſomething repreſented by the Underſtanding, and ſo appearing to the Will, as Evil. Whence all that God requires of us is, and can be only this; to refuſe the Evil, and chuſe the Good. Wherefore, to ſay that Evidence propoſed, apprehended and conſidered, is not ſufficient to make the Underſtanding approve; or that the greateſt Good propoſed, the greateſt Evil threatned, when equally believ'd and reflected on, is not ſufficient to engage the Will to chuſe the Good and refuſe the Evil, is in Effect to ſay, *that which alone doth move the Will to chuſe or to refuſe*, is not ſufficient to engage it ſo to do; which being contradictory to it ſelf, muſt of Neceſſity be falſe. Be it then ſo, that we naturally have an Averſation to the Truths propoſed to us in the Goſpel; that only can make us indiſpoſed to attend to them, but cannot hinder our Conviction, when we do apprehend them, and attend to them.---- Be it, that there is in us alſo a Renitency to the Good we are to chuſe; that only can indiſpoſe us to believe it is, and to approve it as our chiefeſt Good. Be it, that we are prone to the Evil that we ſhould decline; that only can render it the more difficult for us to believe it is the worſt of Evils. But yet, *what we do really believe to be our chiefeſt Good, will ſtill be choſen; and what we apprehend to be the worſt of Evils, will, whilſt we do continue under that Conviction, be refuſed by us.* It therefore can be only requiſite, in order to theſe Ends, that the good Spirit ſhould ſo illuminate our Underſtandings, that we attending to, and conſidering what lies before us, ſhould apprehend, and be convinced of our Duty; and that the Bleſſings of the Goſpel ſhould be ſo propounded to us, as that we may diſcern them to be our chiefeſt Good; and the Miſeries it threateneth, ſo as we may be convinced they are the worſt of Evils; that we may chuſe the one, and refuſe the other." Here

* Edit. 2d P. 211, 212, 213.

Here let it be observed, how plainly and peremptorily it is asserted, *that the greatest Good proposed, and the greatest Evil threatned, when equally believed and reflected on, is sufficient to engage the Will to chuse the Good, and refuse the Evil, and is that alone which doth move the Will to chuse or to refuse; and that it is contradictory to it self, to suppose otherwise; and therefore must of Necessity be false; and then what we do really believe to be our chiefest Good will still be chosen, and what we apprehend to be the worst of Evils, will, whilst we continue under that Conviction, be refused by us.* Nothing could have been said more to the Purpose, fully to signify and declare, that the Determinations of the Will must evermore follow the Illumination, Conviction and Notice of the Understanding, with Regard to the greatest Good and Evil proposed, reckoning both the Degree of Good and Evil understood, and the Degree of Understanding, Notice and Conviction of that proposed Good and Evil; and that it is thus necessarily, and can be otherwise in no Instance: because it is asserted, that it implies a Contradiction, to suppose it ever to be otherwise.

I am sensible, the Doctor's Aim in these Assertions is against the *Calvinists*; to shew, in Opposition to them, that there is no Need of any physical Operation of the Spirit of God on the Will, to change and determine that to a good Choice, but that God's Operation and Assistance is only moral, suggesting Ideas to the Understanding; which he supposes to be enough, if those Ideas are attended to, infallibly to obtain the End. But whatever his Design was, Nothing can more directly and fully prove, that every Determination of the Will, in chusing and refusing, *is necessary*; directly contrary to his own Notion of the Liberty of the Will. For if the Determination of the Will, evermore, in this Manner, follows the Light, Conviction and View of the Understanding, concerning the greatest Good and Evil, and this be that alone which moves the Will, and it be a Contradiction to suppose otherwise; then it is *necessarily* so, the Will necessarily follows this Light or View of the Understanding, not only in some of it's Acts, but in every Act of chusing and refusing. So that the Will don't determine it self in any one of it's own Acts; but all it's Acts, every Act of Choice and Refusal, depends on, and is necessarily connected with some antecedent Cause; which Cause is not the Will it self, nor any Act of it's own, nor any Thing pertaining to that Faculty, but something belonging to another Faculty, whose Acts go before the Will, in all it's Acts, and govern and determine them every one.

Here,

Here, if it should be replied, that altho' it be true, that according to the Doctor, the final Determination of the Will always depends upon, and is infallibly connected with the Understanding's Conviction, and Notice of the greatest Good; yet the Acts of the Will are not necessary; because that Conviction and Notice of the Understanding is first dependent on a preceeding Act of the Will, in determining to attend to, and take Notice of the Evidence exhibited; by which Means the Mind obtains that Degree of Conviction which is sufficient and effectual to determine the consequent and ultimate Choice of the Will; and that the Will with Regard to that preceeding Act, whereby it determines whether to attend or no, is not necessary; and that in this, the Liberty of the Will consists, that when God holds forth sufficient objective Light, the Will is at Liberty whether to command the Attention of the Mind to it.

Nothing can be more weak and inconsiderate than such a Reply as this. For that preceeding Act of the Will, in determining to attend and consider, still is an *Act of the Will* (it is so to be sure, if the *Liberty of the Will* consists in it, as is supposed) and if it be an Act of the Will, it is an Act of *Choice* or *Refusal*. And therefore, if what the Doctor asserts be true, it is determined by some antecedent Light in the Understanding concerning the greatest apparent Good or Evil. For he asserts, it is that Light *which alone doth move the Will to chuse or refuse*. And therefore the Will must be moved by that in chusing to attend to the objective Light offered, in order to another consequent Act of Choice: so that this Act is no less necessary than the other. And if we suppose another Act of the Will, still preceeding both these mention'd, to determine both, still that also must be an Act of the Will, & an Act of Choice; and so must, by the same Principles, be infallibly determin'd by some certain Degree of Light in the Understanding concerning the greatest Good. And let us suppose as many Acts of the Will, one preceeding another, as we please, yet they are every one of them necessarily determined by a certain Degree of Light in the Understanding, concerning the greatest and most eligible Good in that Case; and so, not one of them free according to Dr. *Whitby*'s Notion of Freedom. And if it be said, the Reason why Men don't attend to Light held forth, is because of ill Habits contracted by evil Acts committed before, whereby their Minds are indispos'd to attend to, and consider of the Truth held forth

to

to them by God, the Difficulty is not at all avoided: still the Question returns, What determined the Will in those preceeding evil Acts? It must, by Dr. *Whitby*'s Principles, still be the View of the Understanding concerning the greatest Good and Evil. If this View of the Understanding be *that alone which doth move the Will to chuse or refuse*, as the Doctor asserts, then every Act of *Choice or Refusal*, from a Man's first Existence, is moved and determined by this View; and this View of the Understanding exciting and governing the Act, must be before the Act: And therefore the Will is necessarily determined, in every one of it's Acts, from a Man's first Existence, by a Cause beside the Will, & a Cause that don't proceed from, or depend on any Act of the Will at all. Which at once utterly abolishes the Doctor's whole Scheme of Liberty of Will; and he, at one Stroke, has cut the Sinews of all his Arguments from the Goodness, Righteousness, Faithfulness and Sincerity of God, in his Commands, Promises, Threatnings, Calls, Invitations, Expostulations; which he makes Use of, under the Heads of Reprobation, Election, Universal Redemption, sufficient and effectual Grace, and the Freedom of the Will of Man; and has enervated and made vain all those Exclamations against the Doctrine of the *Calvinists*, as charging God with manifest Unrighteousness, Unfaithfulness, Hypocrisy, Fallaciousness, and Cruelty; which he has over, and over, and over again, numberless Times in his Book.

Dr. *Samuel Clark*, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, † to evade the Argument to prove the Necessity of Volition, from it's necessary Connection with the last Dictate of the Understanding, supposes the latter not to be diverse from the Act of the Will it self. But if it be so, it will not alter the Case as to the Evidence of the Necessity of the Act of the Will. If the Dictate of the Understanding be the very same with the Determination of the Will or Choice, as Dr. *Clark* supposes, then this Determination is no *Fruit* or *Effect of Choice*: And if so, no Liberty of Choice has any Hand in it: As to Volition or Choice, it is necessary; That is, Choice can't prevent it. If the last Dictate of the Understanding be the same with the Determination of Volition it self, then the Existence of that Determination must be necessary as to Volition; in as much as Volition can have no Opportunity to determine whether it shall exist or no, it having Existence already before Voli-

† Edit. 6. P. 93.

tion has Opportunity to determine any Thing. It is it self the very Rise and Existence of Volition. But a Thing, after it exists, has no Opportunity to determine as to it's own Existence; it is too late for that.

If Liberty consists in that which *Arminians* suppose, *viz.* in the Will's determining it's own Acts, having free Opportunity, and being without all Necessity; This is the same as to say, that Liberty consists in the Soul's having Power and Opportunity to have what Determinations of the Will it pleases or chuses. And if the Determinations of the Will, and the last Dictates of the Understanding be the same Thing, then Liberty consists in the Mind's having Power to have what Dictates of the Understanding it pleases, having Opportunity to chuse it's own Dictates of Understanding. But this is absurd; for it is to make the Determination of Choice prior to the Dictate of Understanding, and the Ground of it; which can't consist with the Dictate of Understanding's being the Determination of Choice it self.

Here is no Way to do in this Case, but only to recur to the old Absurdity, of one Determination before another, and the Cause of it; and another before that, determining that; and so on *in infinitum*. If the last Dictate of the Understanding be the Determination of the Will it self, and the Soul be free with Regard to that Dictate, in the *Arminian* Notion of Freedom; then the Soul, before that Dictate of it's Understanding exists, voluntarily and according to it's own Choice determines, in every Case, what that Dictate of the Understanding shall be; otherwise that Dictate, as to the Will, is necessary; and the Acts determined by it, must also be necessary. So that here is a Determination of the Mind prior to that Dictate of the Understanding, an Act of Choice going before it, chusing and determining what that Dictate of the Understanding shall be: and this preceeding Act of Choice, being a free Act of Will, must also be the same with another last Dictate of the Understanding: And if the Mind also be free in that Dictate of Understanding, that must be determined still by another; and so on forever.

Besides, if the Dictate of the Understanding, and Determination of the Will be the same, this confounds the Understanding and Will, and makes them the same. Whether they be the same or no, I will not now dispute; but only would observe, that if it be so, and the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty

Liberty conſiſts in a Self-determining Power in the Underſtanding, free of all Neceſſity; being independent, undetermined by any Thing prior to it's own Acts and Determinations; and the more the Underſtanding is thus independent, and ſovereign over it's own Determinations, the more free. By this therefore the Freedom of the Soul, as a moral Agent, muſt conſiſt in the Independence of the Underſtanding on any Evidence or Appearance of Things, or any Thing whatſoever that ſtands forth to the View of the Mind, prior to the Underſtanding's Determination. And what a Sort of Liberty is this! conſiſting in an Ability, Freedom and Eaſineſs of judging, either according to Evidence, or againſt it; having a ſovereign Command over it ſelf at all Times, to judge, either agreably or diſagreably to what is plainly exhibited to it's own View. Certainly, 'tis no Liberty that renders Perſons the proper Subjects of perſwaſive Reaſoning, Arguments, Expoſtulations, and ſuch like moral Means and Inducements. The Uſe of which with Mankind, is a main Argument of the *Arminians*, to defend their Notion of Liberty without all Neceſſity. For according to this, the more free Men are, the leſs they are under the Government of ſuch Means, leſs ſubject to the Power of Evidence and Reaſon, and more independent on their Influence, in their Determinations.

And whether the Underſtanding and Will are the ſame or no, as Dr. *Clark* ſeems to ſuppoſe, yet in order to maintain the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty without Neceſſity, the free Will is not determined by the Underſtanding, nor neceſſarily connected with the Underſtanding; and the further from ſuch Connection, the greater the Freedom. And when the Liberty is full and compleat, the Determinations of the Will have no Connection at all with the Dictates of the Underſtanding. And if ſo, in vain are all Applications to the Underſtanding, in order to induce to any free vertuous Act; and ſo in vain are all Inſtructions, Counſels, Invitations, Expoſtulations, and all Arguments & Perſwaſives whatſoever: For theſe are but Applications to the Underſtanding, and a clear and lively Exhibition of the Objects of Choice to the Mind's View. But if, after all, the Will muſt be ſelf-determined, and independent on the Underſtanding, to what Purpoſe are Things thus repreſented to the Underſtanding, in order to determine the Choice?

Section X.

Volition necessarily connected with the Influence of Motives; *with particular Observations on the great Inconsistence of Mr.* Chubb's *Assertions and Reasonings, about the Freedom of the Will.*

THAT every Act of the Will has some Cause, and consequently (by what has been already proved) has a necessary Connection with it's Cause, and so is necessary by a Necessity of Connection and Consequence, is evident by this, That every Act of the Will whatsoever, is excited by some Motive: Which is manifest, because, if the Will or Mind, in willing and chusing after the Manner that it does, is excited so to do by no Motive or Inducement, then it has no End which it proposes to it self, or pursues in so doing; it aims at Nothing, and seeks Nothing. And if it seeks Nothing, then it don't go after any Thing, or exert any Inclination or Preference towards any Thing. Which brings the Matter to a Contradiction; Because for the Mind to will something, and for it to go after something by an Act of Preference and Inclination, are the same Thing.

But if every Act of the Will is excited by a Motive, then that Motive is the Cause of the Act of the Will. If the Acts of the Will are excited by Motives, then Motives are the Causes of their being excited; or, which is the same Thing, the Cause of their being put forth into Act and Existence. And if so, the Existence of the Acts of the Will is properly the Effect of their Motives. Motives do Nothing as Motives or Inducements, but by their Influence; and so much as is done by their Influence, is the Effect of them. For that is the Notion of an Effect, something that is bro't to pass by the Influence of another Thing.

And if Volitions are properly the Effects of their Motives, then they are necessarily connected with their Motives. Every Effect and Event being, as was proved before, necessarily connected with that which is the proper Ground and Reason of it's Existence. Thus it is manifest, that Volition is necessary,

ceſſary, and is not from any Self-determining Power in the Will: The Volition which is cauſed by previous Motive and Inducement, is not cauſed by the Will exerciſing a ſovereign Power over it ſelf, to determine, cauſe and excite Volitions in it ſelf. This is not conſiſtent with the Will's acting in a State of Indifference and Equilibrium, to determine it ſelf to a Preference; for the Way in which Motives operate, is by biaſſing the Will, and giving it a certain Inclination or Preponderation one Way.

Here it may be proper to obſerve, that Mr. *Chubb*, in his Collection of Tracts on various Subjects, has advanced a Scheme of Liberty, which is greatly divided againſt it ſelf, and thoroughly ſubverſive of it ſelf; and that many Ways.

I. He is abundant in aſſerting, that the Will, in all it's Acts, is influenced by Motive and Excitement; and that this is the *previous Ground and Reaſon* of all it's Acts, and that it is never otherwiſe in any Inſtance. He ſays, (P.262.) *No Action can take Place without ſome Motive to excite it.* And in P.263. *Volition cannot take Place without ſome PREVIOUS Reaſon or Motive to induce it.* And in P. 310. *Action would not take Place without ſome Reaſon or Motive to induce it; it being abſurd to ſuppoſe, that the active Faculty would be exerted without ſome PREVIOUS Reaſon to diſpoſe the Mind to Action.* So alſo P. 257. And he ſpeaks of theſe Things as what we may be abſolutely certain of, and which are the Foundation, the only Foundation we have of a Certainty of the moral Perfections of God. P.252, 253, 254, 255, 261, 262, 263, 264.

And yet at the ſame Time, by his Scheme, the Influence of Motives upon us to excite to Action, and to be actually a Ground of Volition, is *conſequent* on the Volition or Choice of the Mind. For he very greatly inſiſts upon it, that in all free Actions, before the Mind is the Subject of thoſe Volitions which Motives excite, it chuſes to be ſo. It chuſes whether it will comply with the Motive, which preſents it ſelf in View, or not; and when various Motives are preſented, it chuſes which it will yield to, and which it will reject. So P. 256. *Every Man has Power to act, or to refrain from acting agreably with, or contrary to, any Motive that preſents.* P. 257. *Every Man is at Liberty to act, or refrain from acting agreably with, or contrary to, what each of theſe Motives, conſidered ſingly, would excite him to.----Man has Power, and is as much at Liberty to reject the Motive that does prevail, as he has Power, and is at Liberty to reject thoſe Motives that*

that do not. And so P. 310, 311. *In order to constitute a moral Agent, it is necessary, that he should have Power to act, or to refrain from acting, upon such moral Motives as he pleases.* And to the like Purpose in many other Places. According to these Things, the Will acts first, and chuses or refuses to comply with the Motive that is presented, before it falls under it's prevailing Influence: And 'tis first determined by the Mind's Pleasure or Choice, what Motives it will be induced by, before it is induced by them.

Now, how can these Things hang together? How can the Mind first act, and by it's Act of *Volition and Choice* determine what Motives shall be the Ground and Reason of it's *Volition* and *Choice?* For this supposes, the Choice is already made, before the Motive has it's Effect; and that the Volition is already exerted, before the Motive prevails, so as actually to be the Ground of the Volition; and makes the prevailing of the Motive, the Consequence of the Volition, which yet it is the Ground of. If the Mind has already chosen to comply with a Motive, and to yield to it's Excitement, it don't need to yield to it after this: for the Thing is effected already, that the Motive would excite to, and the Will is before-hand with the Excitement; and the Excitement comes in too late, and is needless and in vain afterwards. If the Mind has already chosen to yield to a Motive which *invites* to a Thing, that implies and in Fact is a chusing the Thing *invited to*; and the very Act of Choice is before the Influence of the Motive which induces, and is the Ground of the Choice; the Son is before-hand with the Father that begets him: The Choice is supposed to be the Ground of that Influence of the Motive, which very Influence is supposed to be the Ground of the Choice. And so *Vice versa*, The Choice is supposed to be the Consequence of the Influence of the Motive, which Influence of the Motive is the Consequence of that very Choice.

And besides, if the Will acts first towards the Motive before it falls under it's Influence, and the prevailing of the Motive upon it to induce it to act and chuse, be the Fruit and Consequence of it's Act and Choice, then how is the Motive *a PREVIOUS Ground and Reason of the Act and Choice*, so that *in the Nature of the Things, Volition cannot take Place without some PREVIOUS Reason and Motive to induce it*, and that this Act is consequent upon, and follows the Motive? Which Things Mr. *Chubb* often asserts, as of certain and undoubted Truth.

So

So that the very same Motive is both *previous* and *consequent*, both before and after, both the Ground and Fruit of the very same Thing!

II. Agreable to the fore-mention'd inconsistent Notion of the Will's first acting towards the Motive, chusing whether it will comply with it, in order to it's becoming a Ground of the Will's acting, before any Act of Volition can take Place, Mr. *Chubb* frequently calls Motives and Excitements to the Action of the Will, *the passive Ground or Reason of that Action*. Which is a remarkable Phrase; than which I presume there is none more unintelligible, and void of distinct and consistent Meaning, in all the Writings of *Duns*, *Scotus*, or *Thomas Aquinas*. When he represents the Motive to Action or Volition as passive, he must mean--passive in that Affair, or passive with Respect to that Action which he speaks of; otherwise it is Nothing to his Purpose, or relating to the Design of his Argument: He must mean (if that can be called a Meaning) that the Motive to Volition is first acted *upon* or *towards* by the Volition, chusing to yield to it, making it a Ground of Action, or determining to fetch it's Influence from thence; and so to make it a previous Ground of it's own Excitation and Existence. Which is the same Absurdity, as if one should say, that the Soul of Man, or any other Thing should, previous to it's existing, chuse what Cause it would come into Existence by, and should act upon it's Cause, to fetch Influence from thence, to bring it into Being; and so it's Cause should be a passive Ground of it's Existence!

Mr. *Chubb* does very plainly suppose Motive or Excitement to be the *Ground of the Being* of Volition. He speaks of it as the Ground or Reason of the EXERTION of an Act of the Will, P. 391, & 392. and expressly says, that *Volition cannot TAKE PLACE* without some *previous Ground or Motive to induce it*, P. 363. And he speaks of the Act as *FROM the Motive*, and *FROM THE INFLUENCE of the Motive*, P. 352. and from *the Influence that the Motive has on the Man, for the PRODUCTION of an Action*. P. 317. Certainly, there is no Need of multiplying Words about this; 'Tis easily judged, whether Motive can be the Ground of Volition's being exerted and taking Place, so that the very Production of it is from the Influence of the Motive, and yet the Motive, before it becomes the Ground of the Volition, is passive, or acted upon by the Volition. But this

this I will ſay, That a Man who inſiſts ſo much on Clearneſs of Meaning in others, and is ſo much in blaming their Confuſion and Inconſiſtence, ought, if he was able, to have explained his Meaning in this Phraſe of *paſſive Ground of Action*, ſo as to ſhew it not to be confuſed and inconſiſtent.

If any ſhould ſuppoſe, that Mr. *Chubb*, when he ſpeaks of Motive as a *paſſive Ground of Action*, don't mean paſſive with Regard to that Volition which it is the Ground of, but ſome other antecedent Volition (tho' his Purpoſe and Argument, and whole Diſcourſe, will by no Means allow of ſuch a Suppoſition) yet it would not help the Matter in the leaſt. For, (1.) If we ſuppoſe there to be an Act of Volition or Choice, by which the Soul chuſes to yield to the Invitation of a Motive to another Volition, by which the Soul chuſes ſomething elſe; both theſe ſuppoſed Volitions are in Effect the very ſame. A Volition, or chuſing to yield to the Force of a Motive inviting to chuſe ſomething, comes to juſt the ſame Thing as chuſing the Thing which the Motive invites to, as I obſerved before. So that here can be no Room to help the Matter, by a Diſtinction of two Volitions. (2.) If the Motive be paſſive with Reſpect, not to the ſame Volition that the Motive excites to, but one truly diſtinct and prior; yet, by Mr. *Chubb*, that prior Volition can't take Place, without a Motive or Excitement, as a *previous Ground* of it's Exiſtence. For he inſiſts, that *it is abſurd to ſuppoſe any Volition ſhould take Place without ſome previous Motive to induce it.* So that at laſt it comes to juſt the ſame Abſurdity: for if *every* Volition muſt have a previous Motive, then the very *firſt* in the whole Series muſt be excited by a previous Motive; and yet the Motive to that firſt Volition is paſſive; but can't be paſſive with Regard to another antecedent Volition, becauſe, by the Suppoſition, it is the very firſt: Therefore if it be paſſive with Reſpect to any Volition, it muſt be ſo with Regard to that very Volition that it is the Ground of, and that is excited by it.

III. Tho' Mr. *Chubb* aſſerts, as above, that every Volition has ſome Motive, and that, *in the Nature of the Thing, no Volition can take Place without ſome Motive to induce it*; yet he aſſerts, that Volition does not always follow the ſtrongeſt Motive; or in other Words, is not governed by any ſuperiour Strength of the Motive that is followed, beyond Motives to the contrary, previous to the Volition it ſelf. His own Words,

Words, P. 258, are as follows : " Tho' with regard to phyſi-
" cal Cauſes, that which is ſtrongeſt always prevails,
" yet it is otherwiſe with regard to moral Cauſes. Of
" theſe, ſometimes the ſtronger, ſometimes the weaker,
" prevails. And the Ground of this Difference is evident,
" namely, that what we call moral Cauſes, ſtrictly ſpeak-
" ing, are no Cauſes at all, but barely paſſive Reaſons of,
" or Excitements to the Action, or to the refraining from
" acting : which Excitements we have Power, or are at
" Liberty to comply with or reject, as I have ſhewed above."
And ſo throughout the Paragraph, he, in a variety of Phraſes, inſiſts, that the Will is not always determined by the ſtrongeſt Motive, unleſs by ſtrongeſt we prepoſterouſly mean actually prevailing in the Event ; which is not in the Motive, but in the Will ; but that the Will is not always determined by the Motive which is ſtrongeſt, by any Strength previous to the Volition it ſelf. And he elſewhere does abundantly aſſert, that the Will is determined by no ſuperiour Strength or Advantage that Motives have, from any Conſtitution or State of Things, or any Circumſtances whatſoever, previous to the actual Determination of the Will. And indeed his whole Diſcourſe on human Liberty implies it, his whole Scheme is founded upon it.

But theſe Things cannot ſtand together. ----- There is ſuch a Thing as a Diverſity of Strength in Motives to Choice, previous to the Choice it ſelf. Mr. *Chubb* himſelf ſuppoſes, that they do *previouſly invite*, *induce*, *excite* and *diſpoſe the Mind to Action*. This implies, that they have ſomething in themſelves that is *inviting*, ſome Tendency to *induce* and *diſpoſe* to Volition, previous to Volition it ſelf. And if they have in themſelves this Nature and Tendency, doubtleſs they have it in certain limited Degrees, which are capable of Diverſity ; and ſome have it in greater Degrees, others in leſs ; and they that have moſt of this Tendency, conſidered with all their Nature and Circumſtances, previous to Volition, they are the ſtrongeſt Motives ; and thoſe that have leaſt, are the weakeſt Motives.

Now if Volition ſometimes don't follow the Motive which is ſtrongeſt, or has moſt previous Tendency or Advantage, all Things conſidered, to induce or excite it, but follows the weakeſt, or that which as it ſtands previouſly in the Mind's View, has leaſt Tendency to induce it ; herein the Will apparently acts wholly without Motive, without any previous Reaſon to diſpoſe the Mind to it, contrary to what the ſame

Author supposes. The Act wherein the Will must proceed without previous Motive to induce it, is the Act of preferring the weakest Motive. For how absurd is it to say, The Mind sees previous Reason in the Motive, to prefer that Motive before the other; and at the same Time to suppose, that there is Nothing in the Motive, in it's Nature, State, or any Circumstances of it whatsoever, as it stands in the previous View of the Mind, that gives it any Preference; but on the contrary, the other Motive that stands in Competition with it, in all these Respects, has most belonging to it, that is inviting and moving, and has most of a Tendency to Choice and Preference? This is certainly as much as to say, there is previous Ground and Reason in the Motive for the Act of Preference, and yet no previous Reason for it. By the Supposition, as to all that is in the two rival Motives which tends to Preference, previous to the Act of Preference, it is not in that which is prefer'd, but wholly in the other: because appearing superiour Strength, and all appearing Preferableness is in that; and yet Mr. *Chubb* supposes, that the Act of Preference is from *previous Ground, and Reason* in the Motive which is preferred. But are these Things consistent? Can there be previous Ground in a Thing for an Event that takes Place, and yet no previous Tendency in it to that Event? If one Thing follows another, without any previous Tendency to it's following, then I should think it very plain, that it follows it without any Manner of previous Reason why it should follow.

Yea, in this Case, Mr. *Chubb* supposes, that the Event follows an Antecedent or a previous Thing, as the Ground of it's Existence, not only that has *no Tendency* to it, but *a contrary Tendency*. The Event is the Preference which the Mind gives to that Motive which is weaker, as it stands in the previous View of the Mind; the immediate Antecedent is the View the Mind has of the two rival Motives conjunctly; in which previous View of the Mind, all the Preferableness, or previous Tendency to Preference, is supposed to be on the other Side, or in the contrary Motive; and all the Unworthiness of Preference, and so previous Tendency to Comparative Neglect, Rejection or Undervaluing, is on that Side which is prefer'd: And yet in this View of the Mind is supposed to be the *previous Ground or Reason* of this Act of Preference, *exciting it, and disposing the Mind to it.* Which, I leave the Reader to judge, whether it be absurd or not. If it be not, then it is not absurd to say, that the

previous

previous Tendency of an Antecedent to a Conſequent, is the Ground and Reaſon why that Conſequent does not follow; and the Want of a previous Tendency to an Event, yea, a Tendency to the Contrary, is the true Ground and Reaſon why that Event does follow.

An Act of Choice or Preference is a comparative Act, wherein the Mind acts with Reference to two or more Things that are compared, and ſtand in Competition in the Mind's View. If the Mind, in this comparative Act, prefers that which appears inferiour in the Compariſon, then the Mind herein acts abſolutely without Motive, or Inducement, or any Temptation whatſoever. Then, if a hungry Man has the Offer of two Sorts of Food, both which he finds an Appetite to, but has a ſtronger Appetite to one than the other; and there be no Circumſtances or Excitements whatſoever in the Caſe to induce him to take either one or the other, but meerly his Appetite: If in the Choice he makes between them, he chuſes that which he has leaſt Appetite to, and refuſes that to which he has the ſtrongeſt Appetite, this is a Choice made abſolutely without previous Motive, Excitement, Reaſon or Temptation, as much as if he were perfectly without all Appetite to either: Becauſe his Volition in this Caſe is a comparative Act, attending and following a comparative View of the Food which he chuſes, viewing it as related to, and compared with the other Sort of Food, in which View his Preference has abſolutely no previous Ground, yea, is againſt all previous Ground and Motive. And if there be any Principle in Man from whence an Act of Choice may ariſe after this Manner, from the ſame Principle Volition may ariſe wholly without Motive on either Side. If the Mind in it's Volition can go beyond Motive, then it can go without Motive: for when it is beyond the Motive, it is out of the Reach of the Motive, out of the Limits of it's Influence, and ſo without Motive. If Volition goes beyond the Strength and Tendency of Motive, and eſpecially if it goes againſt it's Tendency, this demonſtrates the Independence of Volition or Motive. And if ſo, no Reaſon can be given for what Mr. *Chubb* ſo often aſſerts, even that *in the Nature of Things Volition cannot take Place without a Motive to induce it.*

If the moſt High ſhould endow a Balance with Agency or Activity of Nature, in ſuch a Manner, that when unequal Weights are put into the Scales, it's Agency could enable

it to cauſe that Scale to deſcend which has the leaſt Weight, and ſo to raiſe the greater Weight; this would clearly demonſtrate, that the Motion of the Balance do's not depend on Weights in the Scales, at leaſt as much, as if the Balance ſhould move it ſelf, when there is no Weight in either Scale. And the Activity of the Balance which is ſufficient to move it ſelf againſt the greater Weight, muſt certainly be more than ſufficient to move it when there is no Weight at all.

Mr. *Chubb* ſuppoſes, that the Will can't ſtir at all without ſome Motive; and alſo ſuppoſes, that if there be a Motive to one Thing, and none to the Contrary, Volition will infallibly follow that Motive. This is vertually to ſuppoſe an entire Dependence of the Will on Motives: If it were not wholly dependent on them, it could ſurely help it ſelf a little without them, or help it ſelf a little againſt a Motive, without help from the Strength and Weight of a contrary Motive. And yet his ſuppoſing that the Will, when it has before it various oppoſite Motives, can uſe them as it pleaſes, and chuſe it's own Influence from them, and neglect the ſtrongeſt, and follow the weakeſt, ſuppoſes it to be wholly independent on Motives.

It further appears, on Mr. *Chubb*'s Suppoſition, that Volition muſt be without any previous Ground in any Motive, thus: If it be as he ſuppoſes, that the Will is not determined by any previous ſuperiour Strength of the Motive, but determines and chuſes it's own Motive, then, when the rival Motives are exactly equal in Strength and Tendency to induce, in all Reſpects, it may follow either; and may in ſuch a Caſe, ſometimes follow one, ſometimes the other. And if ſo, this Diverſity which appears between the Acts of the Will, is plainly without previous Ground in either of the Motives; for all that is previouſly in the Motives, is ſuppoſed preciſely and perfectly the ſame, without any Diverſity whatſoever. Now perfect Identity, as to all that is previous in the Antecedent, can't be the Ground and Reaſon of Diverſity in the Conſequent. Perfect Identity in the Ground can't be a Reaſon why it is not followed with the ſame Conſequence. And therefore the Source of this Diverſity of Conſequence muſt be ſought for elſewhere.

And laſtly, it may be obſerved, that however Mr. *Chubb* does much inſiſt that no Volition can take Place without

ſome

ſome Motive to induce it, which previouſly diſpoſes the Mind to it; yet, as he alſo inſiſts that the Mind without Reference to any previous ſuperiour Strength of Motives, picks and chuſes for it's Motive to follow; He himſelf here in plainly ſuppoſes, that with Regard to the Mind's Preference of one Motive before another, it is not the Motive that diſpoſes the Will, but the Will diſpoſes it ſelf to follow the Motive.

IV. Mr. *Chubb* ſuppoſes Neceſſity to be utterly inconſiſtent with *Agency*; and that to ſuppoſe a Being to be an Agent in that which is neceſſary, is a plain Contradiction. P. 311. And throughout his Diſcourſes on the Subject of Liberty, he ſuppoſes, that Neceſſity cannot conſiſt with Agency or Freedom; and that to ſuppoſe otherwiſe, is to make Liberty and Neceſſity, Action and Paſſion, the ſame Thing. And ſo he ſeems to ſuppoſe, that there is no Action ſtrictly ſpeaking, but Volition; and that as to the Effects of Volition in Body or Mind, in themſelves conſidered, being neceſſary, they are ſaid to be free, only as they are the Effects of an Act that is not neceſſary.

And yet, according to him, Volition it ſelf is the *Effect of Volition*; yea, every Act of free Volition: and therefore every Act of free Volition muſt, by what has now been obſerved from Him, be neceſſary. That every Act of free Volition is it ſelf the Effect of Volition, is abundantly ſuppoſed by Him. In P. 341, he ſays, "If a Man is ſuch a "Creature as I have above proved him to be, that is, if he "has in him a Power or Liberty of doing either Good or "Evil, and either of theſe is the Subject of his own free "Choice, ſo that he might, IF HE HAD PLEASED, "have CHOSEN and done the contrary."-----Here He ſuppoſes, all that is Good or Evil in Man is the Effect of his Choice; and ſo that his good or evil Choice it ſelf is the Effect of his Pleaſure or Choice, in theſe Words, *He might if he had PLEASED, have CHOSEN the contrary.* So in P. 356. "Tho' it be highly reaſonable, that a Man ſhould always "chuſe the greater Good, --- yet he may, if he PLEASE, "CHUSE otherwiſe." Which is the ſame Thing as if he had ſaid, *He may, if he chuſes, chuſe otherwiſe.* And then he goes on, "--- that is, he may, *if he pleaſes, chuſe* what is good for himſelf &c." And again in the ſame Page, "The "Will is not confined by the Underſtanding to any parti-"cular Sort of Good, whether greater or leſs; but is at "Liberty

" Liberty *to chuse* what Kind of Good *it pleases.*"---If there be any Meaning in these last Words, the Meaning must be this, that *the Will is at Liberty to chuse what Kind of Good it chuses to chuse*; supposing the Act of Choice it self determined by an antecedent Choice. The Liberty Mr. *Chubb* speaks of, is not only a Man's having Power to move his Body agreably to an antecedent Act of Choice, but to use or exert the Faculties of his Soul. Thus, in P. 379. speaking of the Faculties of his Mind, he says, " Man has Power, and " is at Liberty to neglect these Faculties, to use them aright, " or to abuse them, *as he pleases.*" And that he supposes an Act of Choice, or Exercise of Pleasure, properly distinct *from*, and antecedent *to* those Acts thus chosen, directing, commanding and producing the chosen Acts, and even the Acts of Choice themselves, is very plain in P. 283. " He " can *command his Actions*; and herein consists his Liberty; " He can give or deny himself that Pleasure *as he pleases.*" And P. 377. " If the Actions of Men --- are not the *Pro-* " *duce of a free Choice*, or Election, but spring from a Necessity " of Nature,---- he cannot in Reason be the Object of Re- " ward or Punishment on their Account. Whereas, if " Action in Man, whether Good or Evil, is *the Produce of* " *Will or free Choice*; so that a Man in either Case, had it " in his Power, and was at Liberty to have CHOSEN the " contrary, he is the proper Object of Reward or Punish- " ment, according as he CHUSES to behave Himself." Here in these last Words, he speaks of *Liberty of CHUSING, according as he CHUSES.* So that the Behaviour which he speaks of as subject to his Choice, is his *chusing* it self, as well as his external Conduct consequent upon it. And therefore 'tis evident, he means not only external Actions, but the Acts of Choice themselves, when he speaks of *all free Actions, as the PRODUCE of free Choice.* And this is abundantly evident in what he says in P. 372, & 373.

Now these Things imply a twofold great Absurdity and Inconsistence.

1. To suppose, as Mr. *Chubb* plainly does, that every free Act of Choice is *commanded by*, and is the *Produce of free Choice*, is to suppose the first free Act of Choice belonging to the Case, yea, the first free Act of Choice that ever Man exerted, to be *the Produce* of an antecedent Act of Choice. But I hope I need not labour at all to convince my Readers, that 'tis an Absurdity to say, the very *first* Act is the Produce of another Act that went *before* it.

2. If

2. If it were both possible and real, as Mr. *Chubb* insists, that every free Act of Choice were the Produce or the Effect of a free Act of Choice; yet even then, according to his Principles, no one Act of Choice would be free, but every one necessary; because, every Act of Choice being the Effect of a foregoing Act, every Act would be necessarily connected with that foregoing Cause. For Mr. *Chubb* himself says, P. 389. "When the Self-moving Power is exerted, it "becomes the necessary Cause of it's Effects."---So that his Notion of a free Act, that is rewardable or punishable, is a Heap of Contradictions. It is a free Act, and yet, by his own Notion of Freedom, is necessary; and therefore by him it is a Contradiction, to suppose it to be free. According to him, every free Act is the Produce of a free Act; so that there must be an infinite Number of free Acts in Succession, without any Beginning, in an Agent that has a Beginning. And therefore here is an infinite Number of free Acts, every one of them free; and yet not any one of them free, but every Act in the whole infinite Chain a necessary Effect. All the Acts are rewardable or punishable, and yet the Agent cannot, in Reason, be the Object of Reward or Punishment, on Account of any one of these Actions. He is active in them all, and passive in none; yet active in none, but passive in all, *&c.*

V. Mr. *Chubb* does most strenuously deny, that Motives are *Causes* of the Acts of the Will; or that the moving Principle in Man is *moved*, or *caused to be exerted* by Motives. His Words P. 388 & 389. are, "If the moving Principle in "Man is MOVED, or CAUSED TO BE EXERTED, "by something external to Man, *which all Motives are*, then "it would not be a Self-moving Principle, seeing it would be "moved by a Principle external to it self. And to say, that a "Self-moving Principle is MOVED, or CAUSED TO BE "EXERTED, by a Cause external to it self, is absurd and "a Contradiction &c."---And in the next Page, 'tis particularly and largely insisted, that Motives are Causes in no Case, that *they are meerly passive in the Production of Action, and have no Causality in the Production of it, --- no Causality, to be the Cause of the Exertion of the Will.*

Now I desire it may be considered, how this can possibly consists with what he says in other Places. Let it be noted here,

1. Mr. *Chubb* abundantly speaks of Motives as *Excitements of the Acts of the Will*; and says, that *Motives do excite Volition, and induce it*, and that they are necessary to this End; that *in the Reason and Nature of Things, Volition cannot take Place without Motives to excite it.* But now if Motives *excite* the Will, they *move* it; and yet he says, 'tis absurd to say, the Will is moved by Motives. And again (if Language is of any Significancy at all) If Motives excite Volition, then they are the *Cause* of it's being excited; and to cause Volition to be excited, is to cause it to be put forth or *exerted.* Yea, Mr. *Chubb* says himself, P. 317. Motive is necessary to the *Exertion* of the active Faculty. To excite, is positively to *do* something; and certainly that which does something, is the Cause of the Thing *done* by it. To create, is to cause to be created; to make, is to cause to be made; to kill, is to cause to be killed; to quicken, is to cause to be quickened; and *to excite*, is *to cause to be excited.* To excite, is to be a Cause, in the most proper Sense, not meerly a negative Occasion, but a Ground of Existence by positive Influence. The Notion of *exciting*, is exerting Influence to cause the Effect to arise or come forth into Existence.

2. Mr. *Chubb* himself, P. 317, speaks of Motives as the Ground and Reason of Action BY INFLUENCE, and BY PREVAILING INFLUENCE. Now, what can be meant by a Cause, but something that is the Ground and Reason of a Thing by it's Influence, an Influence that is *prevalent* and so effectual?

3. This Author not only speaks of Motives as the Ground and Reason of Action, by prevailing Influence; but expressly of their *Influence as prevailing* FOR THE PRODUCTION of an Action, in the same P. 317: which makes the Inconsistency still more palpable and notorious. The *Production* of an Effect is certainly the *Causing* of an Effect; and *productive Influence* is *causal Influence*, if any Thing is; And that which has this Influence prevalently, so as thereby to become the Ground of another Thing, is a Cause of that Thing, if there be any such Thing as a Cause. This Influence, Mr. *Chubb* says, Motives have to produce an Action; and yet he says, 'tis absurd and a Contradiction, to say they are Causes.

4. In the same Page, He once and again speaks of Motives as *disposing* the Agent to Action, *by their Influence.* His Words

Words are these: "As Motive, which takes Place in the "Understanding, and is the Product of Intelligence, is "NECESSARY to Action, that is, to the EXERTION of "the active Faculty, because that Faculty would not be ex- "erted without some PREVIOUS REASON to DISPOSE "the Mind to Action; so from hence it plainly appears, "that when a Man is said to be *disposed* to one Action ra- "ther than another, this properly signifies the PREVAIL- "ING INFLUENCE that one Motive has upon a Man "FOR THE PRODUCTION of an Action, or for the "being at Rest, before all other Motives, for the *Production* "of the contrary. For as Motive is the Ground and Rea- "son of any Action, so the Motive that *prevails*, DISPOSES "the Agent to the Performance of that Action."

Now, if Motives dispose the Mind to Action, then they *cause* the Mind to be disposed; and to cause the Mind to be disposed, is to cause it to be willing; and to cause it to be willing, is to cause it to will; and that is the same Thing as to be the Cause of an Act of the Will. And yet this same Mr. *Chubb* holds it to be absurd, to suppose Motive to be a Cause of the Act of the Will.

And if we compare these Things together, we have here again a whole Heap of Inconsistences. *Motives are the previous Ground and Reason* of the Acts of the Will; yea, the *necessary* Ground & Reason of *their Exertion*, *without which they will not be exerted*, *and cannot in the Nature of Things take Place*; and they do *excite* these Acts of the Will, and do this by *a prevailing Influence*; yea, *an Influence which prevails for the Production of the Act* of the Will, and for *the disposing of the Mind to it*: And yet 'tis *absurd*, to suppose *Motive to be a Cause* of an Act of the Will, or that *a Principle of Will is moved or caused to be exerted by it*, or that it has *any Causality in the Production of it*, or *any Causality to be the Cause of the Exertion of the Will*.

A due Consideration of these Things which Mr. *Chubb* has advanced, the strange Inconsistences which the Notion of Liberty consisting in the Will's Power of Self-determination void of all Necessity, united with that Dictate of common Sense, that there can be no Volition without a Motive, drove him into, may be sufficient to convince us, that it is utterly impossible ever to make that Notion of Liberty consistent with the Influence of Motives in Volition. And as it is in a man-

ner ſelf-evident, that there can be no Act of Will, Choice or Preference of the Mind, without ſome Motive or Inducement, ſomething in the Mind's View, which it aims at, ſeeks, inclines to, and goes after; ſo 'tis moſt manifeſt, there is no ſuch Liberty in the Univerſe as *Arminians* inſiſt on; nor any ſuch Thing poſſible, or conceivable.

Section XI.

The Evidence of GOD's certain Foreknowledge *of the Volitions of moral Agents.*

THAT the Acts of the Wills of moral Agents are not contingent Events, in that Senſe, as to be without all Neceſſity, appears by God's certain Foreknowledge of ſuch Events.

In handling this Argument, I would in the *firſt* Place prove, that God has a certain Foreknowledge of the voluntary Acts of moral Agents; and *ſecondly*, ſhew the Conſequence, or how it follows from hence, that the Volitions of moral Agents are not contingent, ſo as to be without Neceſſity of Connection and Conſequence.

First, I am to prove, that God has an abſolute and certain Foreknowledge of the free Actions of moral Agents.

One would think, it ſhould be wholly needleſs to enter on ſuch an Argument with any that profeſs themſelves Chriſtians: But ſo it is; God's certain Foreknowledge of the free Acts of moral Agents, is denied by ſome that pretend to believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God; and eſpecially of late. I therefore ſhall conſider the Evidence of ſuch a Preſcience in the moſt High, as fully as the deſigned Limits of this Eſſay will admit of; ſuppoſing my ſelf herein to have to do with ſuch as own the Truth of the Bible.

Arg. I. My *firſt* Argument ſhall be taken from God's *Prediction* of ſuch Events. Here I would in the firſt Place lay down theſe two Things as Axioms.

(1.) If

(1.) If God don't foreknow, He can't foretell such Events; that is, He can't peremptorily and certainly foretell them. If God has no more than an uncertain Guess concerning Events of this Kind, then He can declare no more than an uncertain Guess. Positively to foretell, is to profess to foreknow, or to declare positive Foreknowlege.

(2.) If God don't certainly foreknow the future Volitions of moral Agents, then neither can He certainly foreknow those Events which are consequent and dependent on these Volitions. The Existence of the one depending on the Existence of the other, the Knowledge of the Existence of the one depends on the Knowledge of the Existence of the other; and the one can't be more certain than the other.

Therefore, how many, how great, and how extensive soever the Consequences of the Volitions of moral Agents may be; tho' they should extend to an Alteration of the State of Things through the Universe, and should be continued in a Series of successive Events to all Eternity, and should in the Progress of Things branch forth into an infinite Number of Series, each of them going on in an endless Line or Chain of Events; God must be as ignorant of all these Consequences, as He is of the Volition whence they first take their Rise: All these Events, and the whole State of Things depending on them, how important, extensive and vast soever, must be hid from him.

These Positions being such as I suppose none will deny, I now proceed to observe the following Things.

1. Men's moral Conduct and Qualities, their Vertues and Vices, their Wickedness and good Practice, Things rewardable and punishable, have often been foretold by God.--- *Pharaoh*'s moral Conduct, in refusing to obey God's Command, in letting his People go, was foretold. God says to *Moses*, Exod. iii. 19. *I am sure, that the King of* Egypt *will not let you go.* Here God professes not only to guess at, but to know *Pharaoh*'s future Disobedience. In Chap. vii. 4. God says, *But* Pharaoh *shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine Hand upon* Egypt, &c. And Chap. ix. 30. *Moses* says to Pharaoh, *As for thee, and thy Servants, I KNOW that ye will not fear the Lord.* See also Chap. xi. 9. --- The moral Conduct of *Josiah*, by Name, in his zealously exerting himself in Opposition to Idolatry, in particular Acts of his, was foretold

above three Hundred Years before he was born, and the Prophecy seal'd by a Miracle, and renewed and confirmed by the Words of a second Prophet, as what surely would not fail, 1 *Kings* xiii. 1,---6, 32. This Prophecy was also in Effect a Prediction of the moral Conduct of the People, in upholding their Schismatical and Idolatrous Worship 'till that Time, and the Idolatry of those Priests of the high Places, which it is foretold *Josiah* should offer upon that Altar of *Bethel*.--- *Micaiah* foretold the foolish and sinful Conduct of *Ahab*, in refusing to hearken to the Word of the Lord by him, and chusing rather to hearken to the false Prophets, in going to *Ramoth-Gilead* to his Ruin, 1 *Kings* xxi. 20,---22.--- The moral Conduct of *Hazael* was foretold, in that Cruelty he should be guilty of; on which *Hazael* says, *What, is thy Servant a Dog, that he should do this Thing!* The Prophet speaks of the Event as what he knew, and not what he conjectured. 2 Kings viii. 12. *I know the Evil thou wilt do unto the Children of* Israel: *Thou wilt dash their Children, and rip up their Women with Child.*---- The moral Conduct of *Cyrus* is foretold, long before he had a Being, in his Mercy to God's People, and Regard to the true God, in turning the Captivity of the *Jews*, and promoting the building of the Temple. Isai. xliv.28. & lxv. 13. Compare 2 *Chron.* xxxvi.22,23. and *Ezra* i. 1,---4.--- How many Instances of the moral Conduct of the *Kings of the North & South*, particular Instances of the wicked Behaviour of the Kings of *Syria* and *Egypt*, are foretold in the xith Chap. of *Daniel?* Their Corruption, Violence, Robbery, Treachery, and Lies. And particularly, how much is foretold of the horrid Wickedness of *Antiochus, Epiphanes*, called there a *vile Person*, instead of *Epiphanes*, or Illustrious. In that Chapter, and also in Chap. viii. ver.9,---14,23, to the End, are foretold his Flattery, Deceit and Lies, his having *his Heart set to do Mischief*, and set *against the holy Covenant*, his *destroying and treading under Foot the holy People*, in a marvellous Manner, his *having Indignation against the holy Covenant, setting his Heart against it*, and *conspiring against it*, his *polluting the Sanctuary of Strength, treading it under Foot, taking away the daily Sacrifice, and placing the Abomination that maketh desolate*; his great Pride, *magnifying himself against God*, and *uttering marvellous Blasphemies against Him*, 'till God in *Indignation should destroy him*. Withal the moral Conduct of the *Jews*, on Occasion of his Persecution, is predicted. 'Tis foretold, that *he should corrupt many by Flatteries*, Chap. xi. 32,---34. But that others should behave with a glorious Constancy and Fortitude, in Opposition to him, *ver.* 32.

And

And that ſome good Men ſhould fall, and repent, *ver.* 35. Chriſt foretold *Peter*'s Sin, in denying his Lord, with it's Circumſtances, in a peremptory Manner. And ſo, that great Sin of *Judas*, in betraying his Maſter, and it's dreadful and eternal Puniſhment in Hell, was foretold in the like poſitive Manner. *Matth.* xxvi. 21,---25. and parallel Places in the other Evangeliſts.

2. Many Events have been foretold by God, which were conſequent and dependent on the moral Conduct of particular Perſons, and were accompliſhed, either by their vertuous or viciousActions.---Thus,the Children of *Iſrael*'s going down into *Egypt* to dwell there, was foretold to *Abraham*, Gen. xv. which was brought about by the Wickedneſs of *Joſeph*'s Brethren in ſelling him, and the Wickedneſs of *Joſeph*'s Miſtreſs, and his own ſignal Vertue in reſiſting her Temptation. The Accompliſhment of the Thing prefigur'd in *Joſeph*'s Dream, depended on the ſame moral Conduct, *Jotham*'s Parable and Prophecy, *Judges* ix. 15,---- 20. was accompliſhed by the wicked Conduct of *Abimelech*, and the Men of *Shechem*. The Prophecies againſt the Houſe of *Eli*, 1 *Sam.* Chap. ii. & iii. were accompliſhed by the Wickedneſs of *Doeg* the *Edomite*, in accuſing the Prieſts ; and the great Impiety, and extreme Cruelty of *Saul* in deſtroying the Prieſts at *Nob.* 1 *Sam.*xxii.---*Nathan*'s Prophecy againſt *David*, 2 *Sam.* xii. 11,12. was fulfil'd by the horrible Wickedneſs of *Abſalom*, in rebelling againſt his Father, ſeeking his Life, and lying with his Concubines in the Sight of the Sun. The Prophecy againſt *Solomon*, 1 Kings xi. 11,---13. was fulfil'd by *Jeroboam*'s Rebellion and Uſurpation, which are ſpoken of as hisWickedneſs, 2 *Chron.*xiii.5,6. compare ver.18. The Prophecy againſt *Jeroboam*'s Family, 1 *Kings* xiv. was fulfil'd by the Conſpiracy, Treaſon, and cruel Murders of *Baaſha*, 2 *Kings* xv. 27, &c. The Predictions of the Prophet *Jehu* againſt the Houſe of *Baaſha*, 1 Kings xvi. at the Beginning, were fulfil'd by the Treaſon and Parricide of *Zimri*, 1 Kings xvi. 9,----13, 20.

3. How often has God foretold the future moral Conduct of Nations and Peoples, of Numbers, Bodies, and Succeſſions of Men ; with God's judicial Proceedings, and many other Events conſequent and dependent on their Vertues and Vices ; which could not be foreknown, if the Volitions of Men, wherein they acted as *moral Agents*, had not been foreſeen ? The future Cruelty of the *Egyptians*

in

in oppreſſing *Iſrael*, and God's judging and puniſhing them for it, was foretold long before it came to paſs. *Gen.* xv. 13, 14. The Continuance of the Iniquity of the *Amorites*, and the Increaſe of it until it *ſhould be full*, and they ripe for Deſtruction, was foretold above four Hundred Years before-hand, *Gen.* xv. 16. *Act.* vii. 6, 7. The Prophecies of the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the Land of *Judah*, were abſolute; 2 *Kings* xx. 17,---19. *Chap.* xxii. 15, to the End. It was foretold in *Hezekiah*'s Time, and was abundantly inſiſted on in the Book of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, who wrote Nothing after *Hezekiah*'s Days. It was foretold in *Joſiah*'s Time, in the Beginning of a great Reformation, 2 *Kings* xxii. And it is manifeſt by innumerable Things in the Predictions of the Prophets, relating to this Event, it's Time, it's Circumſtances, it's Continuance and End; the Return from the Captivity, the Reſtoration of the Temple, City & Land, and many Circumſtances, and Conſequences of *That*; I ſay, theſe ſhew plainly, that the Prophecies of this great Event were *abſolute*. And yet this Event was connected with, and dependent on two Things in Men's moral Conduct: firſt, the injurious Rapine and Violence of the King of *Babylon* and his People, as the efficient Cauſe; which God often ſpeaks of as what he highly reſented, and would ſeverely puniſh; and 2dly, The final Obſtinacy of the *Jews*. That great Event is often ſpoken of as ſuſpended on this. *Jer.* iv. 1.& v. 1, vii. 1,---7. xi. 1,---6. xvii. 24, to the End. xxv. 1,---7. xxvi. 1,---8. 13. & xxxviii. 17,18. Therefore this Deſtruction and Captivity could not be foreknown, unleſs ſuch a moral Conduct of the *Chaldeans* and *Jews* had been foreknown. And then it was foretold, that the People *ſhould be finally obſtinate*, to the Deſtruction and utter Deſolation of the City and Land. *Iſai*, vi. 9,----11. *Jer.* i. 18, 19. vii. 27, ---29. *Ezek.* iii. 7. & xxiv. 13, 14.

The final Obſtinacy of thoſe *Jews* who were left in the Land of *Iſrael*, and who afterwards went down into *Egypt*, in their Idolatry and Rejection of the true God, was foretold by God, and the Prediction confirmed with an Oath. *Jer.* xliv. 26,27. And God tells the People, *Iſai.* xlviii. 3.4,---8. that he had predicted thoſe Things which ſhould be conſequent on their Treachery and Obſtinacy, becauſe he knew they would be obſtinate; and that he had declared theſe Things beforehand, for their Conviction of his being the only true God, *&c.*

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The Deſtruction of *Babylon*, with many of the Circumſtances of it, was fore-told, as the Judgment of God for the exceeding Pride and Haughtineſs of the Heads of that Monarchy, *Nebuchadnezzar*, and his Succeſſors, and their wickedly deſtroying other Nations, and particularly for their exalting themſelves againſt the true God and his People, before any of theſe Monarchs had a Being; *Iſai. Chap.* xiii, xiv, xlvii: Compare *Habbak.* ii. 5, to the End, and *Jer. Chap.* l. and li. That *Babylon*'s Deſtruction was to be a *Recompence, according to the Works of their own Hands*, appears by *Jer.* xxv. 14.--- The Immorality which the People of *Babylon*, and particularly her Princes and great Men, were guilty of, that very Night that the City was deſtroyed, their Revelling and Drunkenneſs at *Belſhazzar*'s Idolatrous Feaſt, was foretold, *Jer.* li. 39, 57.

The Return of the *Jews* from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity is often very particularly foretold, with many Circumſtances, and the Promiſes of it are very peremptory; *Jer.* xxxi. 35, ---40. and xxxii. 6, --- 15, 41,---44. and xxxiii. 24,---26. And the very Time of their Return was prefix'd; *Jer.* xxv. 11, 12. and xxix. 10,11. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 21. *Ezek.* iv. 6. and *Dan.* ix. 2. And yet the Prophecies repreſent their Return as conſequent on their Repentance. And their Repentance it ſelf is very expreſly and particularly foretold, *Jer.* xxix. 12, 13,14. xxxi.8,9,18,---31. xxxiii. 8. l. 4,5. *Ezek.*vi.8,9,10.vii. 16. xiv. 22, 23. and xx. 43, 44.

It was foretold under the old Teſtament, that the Meſſiah ſhould ſuffer greatly through the Malice and Cruelty of Men; as is largely and fully ſet forth, *Pſal.* xxii. applied to Chriſt in the New Teſtament, *Matt.* xxvii. 35, 43. *Luke* xxiii. 34. *Joh.* xix. 24. *Heb.* ii. 12. And likewiſe in *Pſal.* lxix. which, it is alſo evident by the New Teſtament, is ſpoken of Chriſt; *John* xv. 25. vii. 5, *&c.* and ii. 17. *Rom.* xv. 3. *Matt.* xxvii. 34, 48. *Mark* xv. 23. *John* xix. 29. The ſame Thing is alſo foretold, *Iſai.* liii. & l. 6. & *Mic.* v. 1. This Cruelty of Men was their Sin, and what they acted as moral Agents. It was foretold, that there ſhould be an Union of Heathen and *Jewiſh* Rulers againſt Chriſt, *Pſal.* ii. 1, 2. compar'd with *Acts* iv. 25,----28. It was foretold, that the *Jews* ſhould generally reject and deſpiſe the Meſſiah, *Iſai.* xlix. 5, 6, 7. and liii. 1---3. *Pſalm.* xxii. 6, 7. and lxix. 4, 8, 19, 20. And it was foretold, that the Body of that Nation ſhould be rejected in the Meſſiah's Days, from being God's People, for their Obſtinacy in Sin; *Iſai.* xlix. 4---7. and viii. 14, 15, 16. compared

pared with *Rom.* x. 19. and *Isai.* lxv. at the beginning, compared with *Rom.* x. 20, 21. It was foretold, that Christ should be rejected by the chief Priests and Rulers among the *Jews*, *Psalm* cxviii. 22. compared with *Matth.* xxi. 42. *Acts* iv. 11. 1 *Pet.* ii. 4, 7.

Christ himself foretold his being delivered into the Hands of the Elders, chief Priests and Scribes, and his being cruelly treated by them, and condemned to Death; and that he by them should be *delivered to the Gentiles*; and that He should be *mocked*, and *scourged*, and *crucified*, (*Matt.* xvi. 21. & xx. 17,---19. *Luke* ix. 22. *John* viii. 28.) and that the People should be concerned in and consenting to his Death, (*Luke* xx. 13,---18.) especially the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*; Luke xiii. 33,--35. He foretold, that the Disciples should all be offended because of Him that Night that he was betrayed, and should forsake Him; *Matt.* xxvi. 31. *John* xvi. 32. He foretold that He should be rejected of that Generation, even the Body of the People, and that they should continue obstinate, to their Ruin; *Matt.* xii. 45. xxi. 33,---42. and xxii. 1,----7. *Luke* xiii. 16, 21, 24. xvii. 25. xix. 14, 27, 41,---44. xx. 13,----18. and xxiii, 34,---39.

As it was foretold in both old Testament and new, that the *Jews* should reject the Messiah, so it was foretold that the *Gentiles* should receive Him, and so be admitted to the Privileges of God's People; in Places too many to be now particularly mentioned. It was foretold in the Old Testament, that the *Jews* should envy the Gentiles on this Account; *Deut.* xxxii. 21. compar'd with *Rom.* x. 19. Christ Himself often foretold, that the Gentiles would embrace the true Religion, and become his Followers and People; *Matth.* viii. 10, 11, 12. xxi. 41,---43. and xxii. 8,---10. *Luke* xiii. 28. xiv. 16,---24. and xx. 16. *John* x. 16. He also foretold the *Jews* Envy of the Gentiles on this Occasion; *Matt.* xx. 12,---16. *Luke* xv. 26, to the End. He foretold, that they should continue in this Opposition and Envy, and should manifest it in cruel Persecutions of his Followers, to their utter Destruction; *Matt.* xxi. 33,---42. xxii. 6. and xxiii. 34,----39. *Luke* xi. 49,--51. The *Jews* Obstinacy is also foretold, *Acts* xxii. 18. Christ often foretold the great Persecutions his Followers should meet with, both from *Jews* and *Gentiles*; *Matt.* x. 16,--18, 21, 22, 34,--36. and xxiv. 9. *Mark* xiii. 9. *Luke* x. 3. xii. 11, 49,--53. and xxi. 12, 16, 17. *John* xv. 18, --21. and xvi. 1,--4. 20,--22, 33. He foretold the Martyrdom

tyrdom of particular Persons; *Matt.* xx. 23. *Joh.* xiii. 36. and xxi. 18, 19, 22. He foretold the great Success of the Gospel in the City of *Samaria*, as near approaching; which afterwards was fulfilled by the Preaching of *Philip*, Joh. iv. 35,---38. He foretold the Rising of many Deceivers, after his Departure, *Matt.* xxiv. 4, 5, 11. and the Apostacy of many of his profess'd Followers; *Matth.* xxiv. 10,---12.

The Persecutions, which the Apostle *Paul* was to meet with in the World, were foretold; *Acts* ix. 16.---xx. 23. & xxi. 11. The Apostle says to the Christian Ephesians, *Acts* xx. 29, 30. *I know, that after my Departure shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock: Also of your own selves shall Men arise, speaking perverse Things, to draw away Disciples after them.* The Apostle says, *He knew this*; but he did not know it, if God did not know the future Actions of moral Agents.

4. Unless God foreknows the future Acts of moral Agents, all the Prophecies we have in Scripture concerning the great *Antichristian* Apostacy; the Rise, Reign, wicked Qualities and Deeds of the *Man of Sin*, and his Instruments and Adherents; the Extent and long Continuance of his Dominion, his Influence on the Minds of Princes and others, to corrupt them, and draw them away to Idolatry, and other foul Vices; his great and cruel Persecutions; the Behaviour of the Saints under these great Temptations, &c. &c. I say, unless the Volitions of moral Agents are foreseen, all these Prophecies are uttered without knowing the Things foretold.

The Predictions relating to this great Apostacy are all of a moral Nature, relating to Men's Vertues and Vices, and their Exercises, Fruits and Consequences, and Events depending on them; and are very particular; and most of them often repeated, with many precise Characteristicks, Descriptions, and Limitations of Qualities, Conduct, Influence, Effects, Extent, Duration, Periods, Circumstances, final Issue, &c. which it would be very long to mention particularly. And to suppose, all these are predicted by God without any certain Knowledge of the future moral Behaviour of free Agents, would be to the utmost Degree absurd.

5. Unless God foreknows the future Acts of Men's Wills, and their Behaviour as moral Agents, all those great Things which are foretold in both Old Testament and New concerning the Erection, Establishment, and universal Extent

of the *Kingdom* of the *Meſſiah*, were predicted and promiſed while God was in Ignorance whether any of theſe Things would come to paſs or no, and did but gueſs at them. For that Kingdom is not of this World, it don't conſiſt in Things external, but is within Men, and conſiſts in the Dominion of Vertue in their Hearts, in Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt; and in theſe Things made manifeſt in Practice, to the Praiſe and Glory of God. The Meſſiah came to *ſave Men from their Sins*, and deliver them *from their* ſpiritual *Enemies*; *that they might ſerve Him in Righteouſneſs and Holineſs before Him: He gave Himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto Himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.* And therefore his Succeſs conſiſts in gaining Men's Hearts to Vertue, in their being made *God's willing People in the Day of his Power.* His Conqueſt of his Enemies conſiſts in his Victory over Men's Corruptions and Vices. And ſuch Succeſs, ſuch Victory, and ſuch a Reign and Dominion is often expreſly foretold: That his Kingdom *ſhall fill the Earth*; *that all People, Nations and Languages ſhould ſerve and obey Him*; and ſo, that *all Nations ſhould go up to the Mountain of the Houſe of the Lord, that He might teach them his Ways, and that they might walk in his Paths:* And that *all Men ſhould be drawn to Chriſt, and the Earth be full of the Knowledge of the Lord* (by which, in the Style of Scripture, is meant true Vertue and Religion) *as the Waters cover the Seas*; that *God's Law ſhould be put into Men's inward Parts, and written in their Hearts*; and that *God's People ſhould be all Righteous*, &c. &c.

A very great Part of the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament is taken up in ſuch Predictions as theſe.---- And here I would obſerve, that the Prophecies of the univerſal Prevalence of the Kingdom of the Meſſiah, and true Religion of Jeſus Chriſt, are delivered in the moſt peremptory Manner, and confirmed by the Oath of God. Iſai. xlv. 22, to the End, *Look to me, and be ye ſaved, all the Ends of the Earth*; *for I am God, and there is none elſe. I have SWORN by my Self, the Word is gone out of my Mouth in Righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that unto Me every Knee ſhall bow*; *and every Tongue ſhall ſwear. SURELY, ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I Righteouſneſs and Strength: even to Him ſhall Men come &c.* But here this peremptory Declaration, and great Oath of the moſt High, are delivered with ſuch mighty Solemnity, to Things which God did not know, if He did not certainly foreſee the Volitions of moral Agents.

And

And all the Predictions of Christ and his Apostles, to the like Purpose, must be without Knowledge: As those of our Saviour comparing the Kingdom of God to a Grain of Mustard-Seed, growing exceeding great, from a small Beginning; and to Leaven, hid in three Measures of Meal, 'till the whole was leaven'd, &c.---And the Prophecies in the Epistles concerning the Restoration of the Nation of the *Jews* to the true Church of God, and the bringing in the Fulness of the *Gentiles*; and the Prophecies in all the *Revelation* concerning the glorious Change in the moral State of the World of Mankind, attending the Destruction of Antichrist, *the Kingdoms of the World becoming the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*; and *it's being granted to the Church to be arrayed in that fine Linnen, white and clean, which is the Righteousness of Saints*, &c.

Corol. 1. Hence that great Promise and Oath of God to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, so much celebrated in Scripture, both in the Old Testament and New, namely, *That in their Seed all the Nations and Families of the Earth should be blessed*, must be made on Uncertainties, if God don't certainly foreknow the Volitions of moral Agents. For the Fulfilment of this Promise consists in that Success of Christ in the Work of Redemption, and that Setting up of his spiritual Kingdom over the Nations of the World, which has been spoken of. Men are *blessed in Christ* no otherwise than as they are bro't to acknowledge Him, trust in Him, love and serve Him, as is represented and predicted in Psal. lxxii. 11. *All Kings shall fall down before Him*; *all Nations shall serve Him.* With ver. 17. *Men shall be blessed in Him*; *all Nations shall call him Blessed.* This Oath to *Jacob* and *Abraham* is fulfilled in subduing Men's Iniquities; as is implied in that of the Prophet *Micah*, Chap. vii. 19,20.

Corol. 2. Hence also it appears, That first Gospel-Promise that ever was made to Mankind, that great Prediction of the Salvation of the Messiah, and his Victory over *Satan*, made to our first Parents, *Gen.* iii. 15. if there be no certain Prescience of the Volitions of moral Agents, must have no better Foundation than Conjecture. For Christ's Victory over *Satan* consists in Men's being saved from Sin, and in the Victory of Vertue and Holiness, over that Vice and Wickedness, which *Satan* by his Temptation has introduced, and wherein his Kingdom consists.

6. If it be so, that God has not a Prescience of the future Actions of moral Agents, it will follow, that the Prophecies of Scripture in *general* are without Fore-knowledge. For Scripture-Prophecies, almost all of them, if not universally without any Exception, are either Predictions of the Actings and Behaviours of moral Agents, or of Events depending on them, or some Way connected with them; judicial Dispensations, Judgments on Men for their Wickedness, or Rewards of Vertue and Righteousness, remarkable Manifestations of Favour to the Righteous, or Manifestations of sovereign Mercy to Sinners, forgiving their Iniquities, and magnifying the Riches of divine Grace; or Dispensations of Providence, in some Respect or other, relating to the Conduct of the Subjects of God's moral Government, wisely adapted thereto; either providing for what should be in a future State of Things, through the Volitions and voluntary Actions of moral Agents, or consequent upon them, and regulated and ordered according to them. So that all Events that are foretold, are either moral Events, or other Events which are connected with, and accommodated to moral Events.

That the Predictions of Scripture in general must be without Knowledge, if God don't foresee the Volitions of Men, will further appear, if it be considered, that almost all Events belonging to the future State of the World of Mankind, the Changes and Revolutions which come to pass in Empires, Kingdoms, and Nations, and all Societies, depend innumerable Ways on the Acts of Men's Wills; yea, on an innumerable Multitude of Millions of Millions of Volitions of Mankind. Such is the State and Course of Things in the World of Mankind, that one single Event, which appears in it self exceeding inconsiderable, may in the Progress and Series of Things, occasion a Succession of the greatest and most important and extensive Events; causing the State of Mankind to be vastly different from what it would otherwise have been, for all succeeding Generations.

For Instance, the coming into Existence of those particular Men, who have been the great Conquerors of the World, which under God have had the main Hand in all the consequent State of the World, in all after-Ages; such as *Nebuchadrezzar*, *Cyrus*, *Alexander*, *Pompey*, *Julius Cesar*, &c. undoubtedly depended on many Millions of Acts of the Will, which followed, and were occasion'd one by another,

ther, in their Parents. And perhaps moſt of theſe Volitions depended on Millions of Volitions of Hundreds and Thouſands of others, their Contemporaries of the ſame Generation; and moſt of theſe on Millions of Millions of Volitions of others in preceeding Generations.--- As we go back, ſtill the Number of Volitions, which were ſome Way the Occaſion of the Event, multiply as the Branches of a River, 'till they come at laſt, as it were, to an infinite Number. This will not ſeem ſtrange, to any one who well conſiders the Matter; if we recollect what Philoſophers tell us of the innumerable Multitudes of thoſe Things which are as it were the *Principia*, or *Stamina Vitæ*, concerned in Generation; the *Animalcula* in *Semine maſculo*, and the *Ova* in the Womb of the Female; the Impregnation, or animating of one of theſe in Diſtinction from all the reſt, muſt depend on Things infinitely minute, relating to the Time and Circumſtances of the Act of the Parents, the State of their Bodies, *&c.* which muſt depend on innumerable foregoing Circumſtances and Occurrences; which muſt depend, infinite Ways, on foregoing Acts of their Wills; which are occaſioned by innumerable Things that happen in the Courſe of their Lives, in which their own, and their Neighbour's Behaviour, muſt have a Hand, an infinite Number of Ways. And as the Volitions of others muſt be ſo many Ways concerned in the Conception and Birth of ſuch Men; ſo, no leſs, in their Preſervation, and Circumſtances of Life, their particular Determinations and Actions, on which the great Revolutions they were the Occaſions of, depended. As for Inſtance, When the Conſpirators in *Perſia*, againſt the *Magi*, were conſulting about a Succeſſion to the Empire, it came into the Mind of one of them, to propoſe, that he whoſe Horſe neighed firſt, when they came together the next Morning, ſhould be King. Now ſuch a Thing's coming into his Mind, might depend on innumerable Incidents, wherein the Volitions of Mankind had been concerned. But in Conſequence of this Accident, *Darius*, the Son of *Hiſtaſpes*, was King. And if this had not been, probably his Succeſſor would not have been the ſame, and all the Circumſtances of the *Perſian* Empire might have been far otherwiſe. And then perhaps *Alexander* might never have conquered that Empire. And then probably the Circumſtances of the World in all ſucceeding Ages, might have been vaſtly otherwiſe. I might further inſtance in many other Occurrences; ſuch as thoſe on which depended *Alexander*'s

ander's Preſervation, in the many critical Junctures of his Life, wherein a ſmall Trifle would have turned the Scale againſt him; and the Preſervation and Succeſs of the *Roman* People, in the Infancy of their Kingdom and Common-Wealth, and afterwards; which all the ſucceeding Changes in their State, and the mighty Revolutions that afterwards came to paſs in the habitable World, depended upon. But theſe Hints may be ſufficient for every diſcerning conſiderate Perſon, to convince him, that the whole State of the World of Mankind, in all Ages, and the very Being of every Perſon who has ever lived in it, in every Age, ſince the Times of the ancient Prophets, has depended on more Volitions, or Acts of the Wills of Men, than there are Sands on the Sea-ſhoar.

And therefore, unleſs God does moſt exactly and perfectly foreſee the future Acts of Men's Wills, all the Predictions which he ever uttered concerning *David*, *Hezekiah*, *Joſiah*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Cyrus*, *Alexander*; concerning the four Monarchies, and the Revolutions in them; and concerning all the Wars, Commotions, Victories, Proſperities and Calamities, of any of the Kingdoms, Nations, or Communities of the World, have all been without Knowledge.

So that, according to this Notion of God's not foreſeeing the Volitions and free Actions of Men, God could foreſee Nothing pertaining to the State of the World of Mankind in future Ages; not ſo much as the Being of one Perſon that ſhould live in it; and could foreknow no Events, but only ſuch as He would bring to paſs Himſelf by the extraordinary Interpoſition of his immediate Power; or Things which ſhould come to paſs in the natural material World, by the Laws of Motion, and Courſe of Nature, wherein that is independent on the Actions or Works of Mankind: That is, as he might, like a very able Mathematician and Aſtronomer, with great Exactneſs calculate the Revolutions of the heavenly Bodies, and the greater Wheels of the Machine of the external Creation.

And if we cloſely conſider the Matter, there will appear Reaſon to convince us, that he could not with any abſolute Certainty foreſee even theſe. As to the *Firſt*, namely Things done by the immediate and extraordinary Interpoſition of God's Power, theſe can't be foreſeen, unleſs it can be foreſeen when there ſhall be Occaſion for ſuch extraordinary

nary Interpoſition. And that can't be foreſeen, unleſs the State of the moral World can be foreſeen. For whenever God thus interpoſes, it is with Regard to the State of the moral World, requiring ſuch Divine Interpoſition. Thus God could not certainly foreſee the univerſal Deluge, the Calling of *Abraham*, the Deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, the Plagues on *Egypt*, and *Iſrael*'s Redemption out of it, the expelling the ſeven Nations of *Canaan*, and the bringing *Iſrael* into that Land; for theſe all are repreſented as connected with Things belonging to the State of the moral World. Nor can God foreknow the moſt proper and convenient Time of the Day of Judgment, and general Conflagration; for that chiefly depends on the Courſe & State of Things in the moral World.

Nor, *Secondly*, can we on this Suppoſition reaſonably think, that God can certainly foreſee what Things ſhall come to paſs, in the Courſe of Things, in the natural and material World, even thoſe which in an ordinary State of Things might be calculated by a good Aſtronomer. For the moral World is the End of the natural World; and the Courſe of Things in the former, is undoubtedly ſubordinate to God's Deſigns with Reſpect to the latter. Therefore he has ſeen Cauſe, from Regard to the State of Things in the moral World, extraordinarily to interpoſe, to interrupt and lay an Arreſt on the Courſe of Things in the natural World; and even in the greater Wheels of it's Motion; even ſo as to ſtop the Sun in it's Courſe. And unleſs he can foreſee the Volitions of Men, and ſo know ſomething of the future State of the moral World, He can't know but that he may ſtill have as great Occaſion to interpoſe in this Manner, as ever He had: nor can He foreſee how, or when, He ſhall have Occaſion thus to interpoſe.

Corol. 1. It appears from the Things which have been obſerved, that unleſs God foreſees the Volitions of moral Agents, that cannot be true which is obſerved by the Apoſtle *James*, Act. xv. 18. *Known unto God are all his Works from the Beginning of the World.*

Corol. 2. It appears from what has been obſerved, that unleſs God foreknows the Volitions of moral Agents, all the Prophecies of Scripture have no better Foundation than meer Conjecture; and *That*, in moſt Inſtances, a Conjecture which muſt have the utmoſt Uncertainty; depending on an innumerable

merable, and as it were infinite, Multitude of Volitions, which are all, even to God, uncertain Events: However, these Prophecies are delivered as absolute Predictions, and very many of them in the most positive Manner, with Asseverations; and some of them with the most solemn Oaths.

Corol. 3. It also follows from what has been observed, that if this Notion of God's Ignorance of future Volitions be true, in vain did Christ say (after uttering many great and important Predictions, concerning God's moral Kingdom, and Things depending on Men's moral Actions) *Matth.* xxiv. 35. *Heaven and Earth shall pass away; but my Words shall not pass away.*

Corol. 4. From the same Notion of God's Ignorance, it would follow, that in vain has God himself often spoken of the Predictions of his Word, as Evidences of his Foreknowlege; and so as Evidences of that which is his Prerogative as GOD, and his peculiar Glory, greatly distinguishing Him from all other Beings; as in *Isai.* xli. 22---26. xliii. 9, 10. xliv. 8. xlv. 21. xlvi. 10. & xlviii. 14.

Argum. II. If God don't foreknow the Volitions of moral Agents, then he did not foreknow the *Fall* of Man, nor of Angels, and so could not foreknow the great Things which are *consequent* on these Events; such as his sending his Son into the World to die for Sinners, and all Things pertaining to the great Work of Redemption; all the Things which were done for four Thousand Years before Christ came, to prepare the Way for it; and the Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ; and the setting Him at the Head of the Universe, as King of Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men; and the setting up his Church and Kingdom in this World, and appointing Him the Judge of the World; and all that Satan should do in the World in Opposition to the Kingdom of Christ: And the great Transactions of the Day of Judgment, that Men and Devils shall be the Subjects of, and Angels concerned in; they are all what God was ignorant of before the Fall. And if so, the following Scriptures, and others like them, must be without any Meaning, or contrary to Truth. Eph. i. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in Him before the Foundation of the World.* 1 Pet. i. 20. *Who verily was fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World.* 2 Tim. i. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling; not according to our Works, but according*

according to his own Purpose, and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began. So, Eph. iii. 11. (speaking of the Wisdom of God in the Work of Redemption) *according to the eternal Purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.* Tit. i. 2. *In hope of eternal Life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the World began.* Rom. viii. 29. *Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate,* &c. 1 Pet. i. 2. *Elect, according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father.*

If God did not foreknow the Fall of Man, nor the Redemption by Jesus Christ, nor the Volitions of Man since the Fall; then He did not foreknow the Saints in any Sense; neither as particular Persons, nor as Societies or Nations; either by Election, or meer Foresight of their Vertue or good Works; or any Foresight of any Thing about them relating to their Salvation; or any Benefit they have by Christ, or any Manner of Concern of their's with a Redeemer.

Arg. III. On the Supposition of God's Ignorance of the future Volitions of free Agents, it will follow, that God must in many Cases truly *repent* what He has done, so as properly to wish He had done otherwise: by Reason that the Event of Things, in those Affairs which are most important, *viz.* the Affairs of his moral Kingdom, being uncertain and contingent, often happens quite otherwise than he was aware beforehand. And there would be Reason to understand That, in the most literal Sense, in Gen. vi. 6. *It repented the Lord, that he had made Man on the Earth, and it grieved him at his Heart.* And that, 1 *Sam.* xv. 11. contrary to that, Numb. xxiii. 19. *God is not the Son of Man, that he should repent.* And, 1 Sam. xv. 15, 29. *Also the Strength of* Israel *will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a Man that he should repent.* Yea, from this Notion it would follow, that God is liable to repent and be grieved at his Heart, in a literal Sense, continually; and is always exposed to an infinite Number of real Disappointments, in his governing the World; and to manifold, constant, great Perplexity and Vexation: But this is not very consistent with his Title of *God over all, blessed for evermore*; which represents Him as possessed of perfect, constant and uninterrupted Tranquillity and Felicity, as God over the Universe, and in his Management of the Affairs of the World, as supreme and universal Ruler. See *Rom.* i. 25. ix. 5. 2 *Cor.* xi. 31. 1 *Tim.* vi. 15.

ARG. IV. It will also follow from this Notion, that as God is liable to be continually repenting what He has done; so He must be exposed to be constantly *changing* his Mind and Intentions, as to his future Conduct; altering his Measures, relinquishing his old Designs, and forming new Schemes & Projections. For his Purposes, even as to the main Parts of his Scheme, namely, such as belong to the State of his moral Kingdom, must be always liable to be broken, thro' want of Foresight; and He must be continually putting his System to rights, as it gets out of Order, through the Contingence of the Actions of moral Agents: He must be a Being, who, instead of being absolutely immutable, must necessarily be the Subject of infinitely the most numerous Acts of Repentance, and Changes of Intention, of any Being whatsoever; for this plain Reason, that his vastly extensive Charge comprehends an infinitely greater Number of those Things which are to Him contingent and uncertain. In such a Situation, He must have little else to do, but to mend broken Links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed Frame and disordered Movements, in the best Manner the Case will allow. The supream Lord of all Things must needs be under great and miserable Disadvantages, in governing the World which He has made, and has the Care of, through his being utterly unable to find out Things of chief Importance, which hereafter shall befal his System; which if He did but know, He might make seasonable Provision for. In many Cases, there may be very great Necessity that He should make Provision, in the Manner of his ordering and disposing Things, for some great Events which are to happen, of vast and extensive Influence, and endless Consequence to the Universe; which He may see afterwards, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that He had known beforehand, that He might have ordered his Affairs accordingly. And it is in the Power of Man, on these Principles, by his Devices, Purposes and Actions, thus to disappoint God, break his Measures, make Him continually to change his Mind, subject Him to Vexation, and bring Him into Confusion.

But how do these Things consist with Reason, or with the Word of God? Which represents, that *all God's Works*, all that He has ever to do, the whole Scheme and Series of his Operations, are *from the Beginning* perfectly in his View; and declares, that *whatever Devices* and Designs *are in the Hearts of Men, the Counsel of the Lord is that which shall stand, and the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations.* Prov.

Prov. xix. 21. Pſal. xxxiii. 10, 11. *And that which the Lord of Hoſts hath purpoſed, none ſhall diſannul*, Iſai. xiv. 27. And that he cannot be fruſtrated *in one Deſign or Thought*, Job xlii. 2. *And that what God doth, it ſhall be forever, that Nothing can be put to it, or taken from it*, Eccl. iii. 14. The Stability and Perpetuity of God's Counſels are expreſly ſpoken of as connected with the Foreknowledge of God, Iſai. xlvi. 10. *Declaring the End from the Beginning, and from ancient Times the Things that are not yet done ; ſaying, My Counſel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my Pleaſure.* --- And how are theſe Things conſiſtent with what the Scripture ſays of God's Immutability, which repreſents Him as *without Variableneſs*, or *ſhadow of Turning* ; and ſpeaks of Him moſt particularly as unchangeable with Regard to his Purpoſes. Mal. iii. 6. *I am the Lord ; I change not ; therefore ye Sons of* Jacob *are not conſumed.* Exod. iii. 14. *I AM THAT I AM.* Job xxiii. 13, 14. *He is in one Mind ; and who can turn Him ? And what his Soul deſireth, even that he doth : for he performeth the Thing that is appointed for me.*

Arg. V. If this Notion of God's Ignorance of the future Volitions of moral Agents be thoroughly conſidered in it's Conſequences, it will appear to follow from it, that God, after he had made the World, was liable to be wholly *fruſtrated of his End* in the Creation of it ; and ſo has been in like Manner liable to be fruſtrated of his End in all the great Works He hath wrought. 'Tis manifeſt, the moral World is the End of the natural : The reſt of the Creation is but an Houſe which God hath built, with Furniture, for moral Agents : And the good or bad State of the moral World depends on the Improvement they make of their natural Agency, and ſo depends on their Volitions. And therefore, if theſe can't be foreſeen by God, becauſe they are contingent, and ſubject to no Kind of Neceſſity, then the Affairs of the moral World are liable to go wrong, to any aſſignable Degree ; yea, liable to be utterly ruined. As on this Scheme, it may well be ſuppoſed to be literally ſaid, when Mankind, by the Abuſe of their moral Agency, became very corrupt before the Flood, *that the Lord repented that he had made Man on the Earth, and it grieved Him at his Heart* ; ſo, when He made the Univerſe, He did not know but that he might be ſo diſappointed in it, that it might grieve Him at his Heart that he had made it. It actually proved, that all Mankind became ſinful, and a very great Part of the Angels apoſtatiſed : And how could

God know before-hand, that all of them would not? And how could God know but that all Mankind, notwithstanding Means used to reclaim them, being still left to the Freedom of their own Will, would continue in their Apostacy, and grow worse and worse, as they of the Old World before the Flood did?

According to the Scheme I am endeavouring to confute, neither the Fall of Men nor Angels, could be foreseen, and God must be greatly disappointed in these Events; and so the grand Scheme and Contrivance for our Redemption, and destroying the Works of the Devil, by the Messiah, and all the great Things God has done in the Prosecution of these Designs, must be only the Fruits of his own Disappointment, and Contrivances of his to mend and patch up, as well as he could, his System, which originally was all very good, and perfectly beautiful; but was mar'd, broken and confounded by the free Will of Angels and Men. And still he must be liable to be totally disappointed a second Time: He could not know, that He should have his desired Success, in the Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection and Exaltation of his only begotten Son, and other great Works accomplished to restore the State of Things: He could not know after all, whether there would actually be any tolerable Measure of Restoration; for this depended on the free Will of Man. There has been a general great Apostacy of almost all the Christian World, to that which was worse than Heathenism; which continued for many Ages. And how could God, without foreseeing Men's Volitions, know whether ever Christendom would return from this Apostacy? And which way could He tell before-hand how soon it would begin? The Apostle says, it began to work in his Time; and how could it be known how far it would proceed in that Age? Yea, how could it be known that the Gospel, which was not effectual for the Reformation of the *Jews*, would ever be effectual for the turning of the Heathen Nations from their Heathen Apostacy, which they had been confirmed in for so many Ages?

'Tis represented often in Scripture, that God who made the World for Himself, and created it for his Pleasure, would infallibly obtain his End in the Creation, and in all his Works; that as all Things are *of* Him, so they would all be *to* Him; and that in the final Issue of Things, it would appear that He is *the first, and the last*. Rev. xxi. 6.

And

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the first and the last. But these Things are not consistent with God's being so liable to be disappointed in all his Works, nor indeed with his failing of his End in any Thing that He has undertaken, or done.

Section XII.

GOD's certain Foreknowledge *of the future Volitions of moral Agents, inconsistent with such a* Contingence *of those Volitions, as is without all* Necessity.

HAVING proved, that GOD has a certain and infallible Prescience of the Acts of the Will of moral Agents, I come now, in the *Second* Place, to shew the Consequence; to shew how it follows from hence, that these Events are *necessary*, with a Necessity of Connection or Consequence.

The chief *Arminian* Divines, so far as I have had Opportunity to observe, deny this Consequence; and affirm, that if such Foreknowledge be allowed, 'tis no Evidence of any Necessity of the Event foreknown. Now I desire, that this Matter may be particularly and thoroughly enquired into. I cannot but think, that on particular and full Consideration, it may be perfectly determined, whether it be indeed so, or not.

In order to a proper Consideration of this Matter, I would observe the following Things.

I. 'Tis very evident, with regard to a Thing whose Existence is infallibly and indissolubly connected with something which already hath, or has had Existence, The Existence of that Thing is necessary. Here may be noted,

1. I obſerved before, in explaining the Nature of Neceſſity, that in Things which are paſt, their paſt Exiſtence is now neceſſary: having already made ſure of Exiſtence, 'tis too late for any Poſſibility of Alteration in that Reſpect: 'Tis now impoſſible, that it ſhould be otherwiſe than true, that that Thing has exiſted.

2. If there be any ſuch Thing as a divine Foreknowledge of the Volitions of free Agents, that Foreknowledge, by the Suppoſition, is a Thing which already *has*, and long ago *had* Exiſtence; and ſo, now it's Exiſtence is neceſſary; it is now utterly impoſſible to be otherwiſe, than that this Foreknowledge ſhould be, or ſhould have been.

3. 'Tis alſo very manifeſt, that thoſe Things which are indiſſolubly connected with other Things that are neceſſary, are Themſelves neceſſary. As that Propoſition whoſe Truth is neceſſarily connected with another Propoſition, which is neceſſarily true, is itſelf neceſſarily true. To ſay otherwiſe, would be a Contradiction; it would be in Effect to ſay, that the Connection was indiſſoluble, and yet was not ſo, but might be broken. If That, whoſe Exiſtence is indiſſolubly connected with ſomething whoſe Exiſtence is now neceſſary, is it ſelf not neceſſary, then it may *poſſibly not exiſt*, notwithſtanding that indiſſoluble Connection of it's Exiſtence.--- Whether the Abſurdity ben't glaring, let the Reader judge.

4. 'Tis no leſs evident, that if there be a full, certain and infallible Foreknowledge of the future Exiſtence of the Volitions of moral Agents, then there is a certain infallible and indiſſoluble Connection between thoſe Events and that Foreknowledge; and that therefore, by the preceeding Obſervations, thoſe Events are neceſſary Events; being infallibly and indiſſolubly connected with that whoſe Exiſtence already is, and ſo is now neceſſary, and can't but have been.

To ſay, the Foreknowledge is certain and infallible, and yet the Connection of the Event with that Foreknowledge is not indiſſoluble, but diſſoluble and fallible, is very abſurd. To affirm it, would be the ſame Thing as to affirm, that there is no neceſſary Connection between a Propoſition's being infallibly known to be true, and it's being true indeed. So that it is perfectly demonſtrable, that if there be any infallible Knowledge of future Volitions, the Event is *neceſſary*;

necessary; or, in other Words, that it is *impossible* but the Event should come to pass. For if it ben't impossible but that it may be otherwise, then it is not impossible but that the Proposition which affirms it's future coming to pass, may not now be true. But how absurd is that, on the Supposition that there is now an infallible Knowledge (i. e. Knowledge which it is impossible should fail) that it is true. There is this Absurdity in it, that it is not impossible but that there now should be no Truth in that Proposition, which is now infallibly known to be true.

II. That no future Event can be certainly foreknown, whose Existence is contingent, and without all Necessity, may be proved thus; 'Tis impossible for a Thing to be certainly known to any Intellect without *Evidence*. To suppose otherwise, implies a Contradiction: Because for a Thing to be certainly known to any Understanding, is for it to be *evident* to that Understanding: And for a Thing to be *evident* to any Understanding, is the same Thing, as for that Understanding to *see Evidence* of it: But no Understanding, created or increated, can *see Evidence* where there is none: For that is the same Thing, as to see that to be, which is not. And therefore, if there be any Truth which is absolutely without Evidence, that Truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch that it implies a Contradiction to suppose that it is known.

But if there be any future Event, whose Existence is contingent, without all Necessity, the future Existence of that Event is absolutely *without Evidence*. If there be any Evidence of it, it must be one of these two Sorts, either *Self-Evidence*, or *Proof*; for there can be no other Sort of Evidence but one of these two; an evident Thing must be either evident *in it self*, or evident *in something else*; that is, evident by Connection with something else. But a future Thing, whose Existence is without all Necessity, can have neither of these Sorts of Evidence. It can't be *Self-evident*: For if it be, it may be now known by what is now to be seen in the Thing it self; either it's present Existence, or the Necessity of it's Nature: But both these are contrary to the Supposition. It is supposed, both that the Thing has no present Existence to be seen; and also that it is not of such a Nature as to be necessarily existent for the future: So that it's future Existence is not Self-evident. And *secondly*, neither is there any

any *Proof*, or Evidence *in any Thing elſe*, or Evidence of Connection with ſomething elſe that is evident; For this alſo is contrary to the Suppoſition. 'Tis ſuppoſed, that there is now Nothing exiſtent, with which the future Exiſtence of the *contingent* Event is connected. For ſuch a Connection deſtroys its *Contingence*, and ſuppoſes Neceſſity. Thus 'tis demonſtrated, that there is in the Nature of Things abſolutely no Evidence at all of the future Exiſtence of that Event, which is contingent, without all Neceſſity (if any ſuch Event there be) neither Self-Evidence nor Proof. And therefore the Thing in Reality is not evident; and ſo can't be ſeen to be evident, or, which is the ſame Thing, can't be known.

Let us conſider this in an Example. Suppoſe that five Thouſand ſeven Hundred and ſixty Years ago, there was no other Being but the divine Being; and then this World, or ſome particular Body or Spirit, all at once ſtarts out of Nothing into Being, and takes on it ſelf a particular Nature and Form; all in *abſolute Contingence*, without any Concern of God, or any other Cauſe, in the Matter; without any Manner of Ground or Reaſon of it's Exiſtence; or any Dependence upon, or Connection at all with any Thing foregoing: I ſay, that if this be ſuppoſed, there was no Evidence of that Event beforehand. There was no Evidence of it to be ſeen *in the Thing it ſelf*; for the Thing it ſelf, as yet, was not. And there was no Evidence of it to be ſeen *in any Thing elſe*; for *Evidence in* ſomething elſe, is *Connection with* ſomething elſe: But ſuch Connection is contrary to the Suppoſition. There was no Evidence before, that this Thing *would happen*; for by the Suppoſition, there was no Reaſon why *it ſhould happen*, rather than ſomething elſe, or rather than Nothing. And if ſo, then all Things before were exactly equal, and the ſame, with Reſpect to that and other poſſible Things; there was no Preponderation, no ſuperiour Weight or Value; and therefore Nothing that could be of any Weight or Value to determine any Underſtanding. The Thing was abſolutely without Evidence, and abſolutely unknowable. An Increaſe of Underſtanding, or of the Capacity of Diſcerning, has no Tendency, and makes no Advance, to a diſcerning any Signs or Evidences of it, let it be increaſed never ſo much; yea, if it be increaſed infinitely. The Increaſe of the Strength of Sight may have a Tendency to enable to diſcern the Evidence which is far

far off, and very much hid, and deeply involved in Clouds and Darkness; but it has no Tendency to enable to discern Evidence where there is none. If the Sight be infinitely strong, and the Capacity of Discerning infinitely great, it will enable to see all that there is, and to see it perfectly, and with Ease; yet it has no Tendency at all to enable a Being to discern that Evidence which is not; But on the contrary, it has a Tendency to enable to discern with great Certainty that there is none.

III. To suppose the future Volitions of moral Agents not to be necessary Events; or, which is the same Thing, Events which it is not impossible but that they may not come to pass; and yet to suppose that God certainly foreknows them, and knows all Things; is to suppose God's Knowledge to be inconsistent with it self. For to say, that God certainly, and without all Conjecture, knows that a Thing will infallibly be, which at the same Time he knows to be so *contingent*, that it may possibly not be, is to suppose his Knowledge inconsistent with it self; or that one Thing that he knows is utterly inconsistent with another Thing that he knows. 'Tis the same Thing as to say, He now knows a Proposition to be of certain infallible Truth, which he knows to be of contingent uncertain Truth. If a future Volition is so without all Necessity, 'that there is nothing hinders but that it may not be, then the Proposition which asserts it's future Existence, is so uncertain, that there is Nothing hinders but that the Truth of it may entirely fail. And if God knows all Things, He knows this Proposition to be thus uncertain. And that is inconsistent with his knowing that it is infallibly true; and so inconsistent with his infallibly knowing that it is true. If the Thing be indeed contingent, God views it so, and judges it to be contingent, if he views Things as they are. If the Event be not necessary, then it is possible it may never be: And if it be possible it may never be, God knows it may possibly never be; and that is to know that the Proposition which affirms it's Existence, may possibly not be true; and that is to know that the Truth of it is uncertain; which surely is inconsistent with his knowing it as a certain Truth. If Volitions are in Themselves contingent Events, without all Necessity, then 'tis no Argument of Perfection of Knowledge in any Being to determine peremptorily that they will be; but on the contrary, an Argument of Ignorance and Mistake: Because it would argue, that

he ſuppoſes that Propoſition to be certain, which in it's own Nature, and all Things conſidered, is uncertain and contingent. To ſay in ſuch a Caſe, that God may have Ways of knowing contingent Events which we can't conceive of, is ridiculous; as much ſo, as to ſay, that God may know Contradictions to be true, for ought we know, or that he may know a Thing to be certain, and at the ſame Time know it not to be certain, tho' we can't conceive how; becauſe he has Ways of knowing, which we can't comprehend.

Corol. 1. From what has been obſerved it is evident, that the abſolute *Decrees* of God are no more inconſiſtent with human Liberty, on Account of any Neceſſity of the Event which follows from ſuch Decrees, than the abſolute *Foreknowledge* of God. Becauſe the Connection between the Event and certain Foreknowledge, is as infallible and indiſſoluble, as between the Event and an abſolute Decree. That is, 'tis no more impoſſible that the Event and Decree ſhould not agree together, than that the Event and abſolute Knowledge ſhould diſagree. The Connection between the Event & Foreknowledge is abſolutely perfect, by the Suppoſition: becauſe it it is ſuppoſed, that the Certainty and Infallibility of the Knowledge is abſolutely perfect. And it being ſo, the Certainty can't be increaſed; and therefore the Connection between the Knowledge and Thing known, can't be increaſed; ſo that if a Decree be added to the Foreknowledge, it don't at all increaſe the Connection, or make it more infallible and indiſſoluble. If it were not ſo, the Certainty of Knowledge might be increaſed by the Addition of a Decree; which is contrary to the Suppoſition, which is, that the Knowledge is abſolutely perfect, or perfect to the higheſt poſſible Degree.

There is as much of an Impoſſibility but that the Things which are infallibly foreknown, ſhould be, or (which is the ſame Thing) as great a Neceſſity of their future Exiſtence, as if the Event were already written down, and was known and read by all Mankind, thro' all preceeding Ages, and there were the moſt indiſſoluble and perfect Connection poſſible, between the Writing, and the Thing written. In ſuch a Caſe, it would be as impoſſible the Event ſhould fail of Exiſtence, as if it had exiſted already; and a Decree can't make an Event ſurer or more neceſſary than this.

And

And therefore, if there be any such Foreknowledge, as it has been proved there is, then Necessity of Connection and Consequence, is not at all inconsistent with any Liberty which Man, or any other Creature enjoys. And from hence it may be infer'd, that absolute Decrees of God, which don't at all increase the Necessity, are not at all inconsistent with the Liberty which Man enjoys, on any such Account, as that they make the Event decreed necessary, and render it utterly impossible but that it should come to pass. Therefore if absolute Decrees are inconsistent with Man's Liberty as a moral Agent, or his Liberty in a State of Probation, or any Liberty whatsoever that he enjoys, it is not on Account of any Necessity which absolute Decrees infer.

Dr. *Whitby* supposes, there is a great Difference between God's Foreknowledge, and his Decrees, with Regard to Necessity of future Events. In his Discourse on the five Points, P. 474, &c. He says, "God's Prescience has no "Influence at all on our Actions.---- Should God (says he) "by immediate Revelation, give me the Knowledge of the "Event of any Man's State or Actions, would my Know-"ledge of them have any Influence upon his Actions? "Surely none at all.---- Our Knowledge doth not affect "the Things we know, to make them more certain, or "more future, than they would be without it. Now Fore-"knowledge in God is Knowledge. As therefore Know-"ledge has no Influence on Things that are, so neither has "Foreknowledge on Things that shall be. And conse-"quently, the Foreknowledge of any Action that would be "otherwise free, cannot alter or diminish that Freedom. "Whereas God's Decree of Election is powerful & active, "and comprehends the Preparation and Exhibition of such "Means, as shall unfrustrably produce the End.---- Hence "God's Prescience renders no Actions necessary." And to this Purpose, P. 473. he cites *Origen*, where he says, *God's Prescience is not the Cause of Things future, but their being future is the Cause of God's Prescience that they will be:* And *Le Blanc*, where he says, *This is the truest Resolution of this Difficulty, that Prescience is not the Cause that Things are future; but their being future is the Cause they are foreseen.* In like Manner Dr. *Clark*, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, P. 95, --- 99. And the Author of *the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature*, speaking to the like Purpose with Dr. *Whitby*, represents *Foreknowledge as having*

having no more Influence on Things known, to make them neceſſary, than *After-Knowledge,* or to that Purpoſe.

To all which I would ſay; That what is ſaid about Knowledge, it's not having Influence on the Thing known to make it neceſſary, is Nothing to the Purpoſe, nor does it in the leaſt affect the foregoing Reaſoning. Whether Preſcience be the Thing that *makes* the Event neceſſary or no, it alters not the Caſe. Infallible Foreknowledge may *prove* the Neceſſity of the Event foreknown, and yet not be the Thing which *cauſes* the Neceſſity. If the Foreknowledge be abſolute, this *proves* the Event known to be neceſſary, or proves that 'tis impoſſible but that the Event ſhould be, by ſome Means or other, either by a Decree, or ſome other Way, if there be any other Way: Becauſe, as was ſaid before, 'tis abſurd to ſay, that a Propoſition is known to be certainly and infallibly true, which yet may poſſibly prove not true.

The whole of the ſeeming Force of this Evaſion lies in this; that, in as much as certain Foreknowledge don't *cauſe* an Event to be neceſſary, as a Decree does; therefore it don't *prove* it to be neceſſary, as a Decree does. But there is no Force in this arguing: For it is built wholly on this Suppoſition, that Nothing can *prove*, or *be an Evidence* of a Thing's being neceſſary, but that which has *a cauſal Influence to make it ſo.* But this can never be maintained. If certain Foreknowledge of the future exiſting of an Event, be not the Thing which firſt *makes* it impoſſible that it ſhould fail of Exiſtence; yet it may, and certainly does *demonſtrate*, that it is impoſſible it ſhould fail of it, however that Impoſſibility comes. If Foreknowledge be not the Cauſe, but the Effect of this Impoſſibility, it may prove that there is ſuch an Impoſſibility, as much as if it were the Cauſe. It is as ſtrong arguing from the Effect to the Cauſe, as from the Cauſe to the Effect. 'Tis enough, that an Exiſtence which is infallibly foreknown, cannot fail, whether that Impoſſibility ariſes from the Foreknowledge, or is prior to it. 'Tis as evident, as 'tis poſſible any Thing ſhould be, that it is impoſſible a Thing which is infallibly known to be true, ſhould prove not to be true; therefore there is a *Neceſſity* that it ſhould be otherwiſe; whether the Knowledge be the Cauſe of this Neceſſity, or the Neceſſity the Cauſe of the Knowledge.

All certain Knowledge, whether it be Foreknowledge or After-Knowledge, or concomitant Knowledge, proves the Thing

Thing known now to be neceſſary, by ſome Means or other; or proves that it is impoſſible it ſhould now be otherwiſe than true.--- I freely allow, that Foreknowledge don't prove a Thing to be neceſſary any more than After-Knowledge: But then After-knowledge which is certain & infallible, proves that 'tis now become impoſſible but that the Propoſition known ſhould be true. Certain After-Knowledge proves that it is now, in the Time of the Knowledge, by ſome Means or other, become impoſſible but that the Propoſition which predicates *paſt* Exiſtence on the Event, ſhould be true. And ſo does certain Foreknowledge prove, that now, in the Time of the Knowledge, it is by ſome Means or other, become impoſſible but that the Propoſition which predicates *future* Exiſtence on the Event, ſhould be true. The Neceſſity of the Truth of the Propoſitions, conſiſting in the preſent Impoſſibility of the Non-exiſtence of the Event affirmed, in both Caſes, is the immediate Ground of the certainty of the Knowledge; there can be no Certainty of Knowledge without it.

There muſt be a Certainty in Things themſelves, before they are certainly known, or (which is the ſame Thing) known to be certain. For Certainty of Knowledge is nothing elſe but knowing or diſcerning the Certainty there is in the Things themſelves which are known. Therefore there muſt be a Certainty in Things to be a Ground of Certainty of Knowledge, and to render Things capable of being known to be certain. And this is Nothing but the Neceſſity of the Truth known, or it's being impoſſible but that it ſhould be true; or, in other Words, the firm and infallible Connection between the Subject and Predicate of the Propoſition that contains that Truth. All Certainty of Knowledge conſiſts in the View of the Firmneſs of that Connection. So God's certain Foreknowledge of the future Exiſtence of any Event, is his View of the firm and indiſſoluble Connection of the Subject and Predicate of the Propoſition that affirms it's future Exiſtence. The Subject is that poſſible Event; the Predicate is it's future exiſting: But if future Exiſtence be firmly and indiſſolubly connected with that Event, then the future Exiſtence of that Event is neceſſary. If God certainly knows the future Exiſtence of an Event which is wholly contingent, and may poſſibly never be, then He ſees a firm Connection between a Subject and Predicate that are not firmly connected; which is a Contradiction.

I allow what Dr. *Whitby* ſays to be true, *That meer Knowledge don't affect the Thing known, to make it more certain or more future.* But yet, I ſay, it *ſuppoſes* and *proves* the Thing to be *already*, both *future*, and *certain*; i. e. neceſſarily future. Knowledge of *Futurity*, ſuppoſes *Futurity*; and a *certain Knowledge* of Futurity, ſuppoſes *certain Futurity*, antecedent to that certain Knowledge. But there is no other certain Futurity of a Thing, antecedent to Certainty of Knowledge, than a prior Impoſſibility but that the Thing ſhould prove true; or (which is the ſame Thing) the Neceſſity of the Event.

I would obſerve one Thing further concerning this Matter, and it is this; That if it be as thoſe foremention'd Writers ſuppoſe, that God's Foreknowledge is not the Cauſe, but the Effect of the Exiſtence of the Event foreknown; this is ſo far from ſhewing that this Foreknowledge don't infer the Neceſſity of the Exiſtence of that Event, that it rather ſhews the contrary the more plainly. Becauſe it ſhews the Exiſtence of the Event to be ſo ſettled & firm, that it is as if it had already been; in as much as *in Effect* it actually exiſts already; it's future Exiſtence has already had actual *Influence* and *Efficiency*, and has *produced an Effect*, viz. Preſcience: The Effect exiſts already; and as the Effect ſuppoſes the Cauſe, is connected with the Cauſe, and depends entirely upon it, therefore it is as if the future Event, which is the Cauſe, had exiſted already. The Effect is firm as poſſible, it having already the Poſſeſſion of Exiſtence, and has made ſure of it. But the Effect can't be more firm and ſtable than it's Cauſe, Ground and Reaſon. The Building can't be firmer than the Foundation.

To illuſtrate this Matter, let us ſuppoſe the Appearances and Images of Things in a Glaſs; for Inſtance, a reflecting Teleſcope to be the real Effects of heavenly Bodies (at a Diſtance, and out of Sight) which they reſemble: If it be ſo, then, as theſe Images in the Teleſcope have had a paſt actual Exiſtence, and it is become utterly impoſſible now that it ſhould be otherwiſe than that they have exiſted; ſo they being the true Effects of the heavenly Bodies they reſemble, this proves the exiſting of thoſe heavenly Bodies to be as real, infallible, firm and neceſſary, as the exiſting of theſe Effects; the one being connected with, and wholly depending on the other.---- Now let us ſuppoſe future Exiſtences ſome Way or other

to

to have Influence back, to produce Effects before-hand, and cauſe exact and perfect Images of themſelves in a Glaſs, a Thouſand Years before they exiſt, yea, in all preceeding Ages; But yet that theſe Images are real Effects of theſe future Exiſtences, perfectly dependent on, and connected with their Cauſe; theſe Effects and Images, having already had actual Exiſtence, rendring that Matter of their Exiſting perfectly firm and ſtable, and utterly impoſſible to be otherwiſe; this proves in like Manner as in the other Inſtance, that the Exiſtence of the Things which are their Cauſes, is alſo equally ſure, firm and neceſſary; and that it is alike impoſſible but that they ſhould be, as if they had been already, as their Effects have. And if inſtead of Images in a Glaſs, we ſuppoſe the antecedent Effects to be perfect Ideas of them in the divine Mind, which have exiſted there from all Eternity, which are as properly Effects, as truly and properly connected with their Cauſe, the Caſe is not altered.

Another Thing which has been ſaid by ſome *Arminians*, to take off the Force of what is urged from God's Preſcience, againſt the Contingence of the Volitions of moral Agents, is to this Purpoſe; "That when we talk of "Foreknowledge in God, there is no ſtrict Propriety in "our ſo Speaking; and that altho' it be true, that there is "in God the moſt perfect Knowledge of all Events from "Eternity to Eternity, yet there is no ſuch Thing as "*before* and *after* in God, but He ſees all Things by "one perfect unchangeable View, without any Succeſſion." ----To this I anſwer,

1. It has been already ſhewn, that all certain Knowledge proves the Neceſſity of the Truth known; whether it be *before*, *after*, or *at the ſame Time*.---- Tho' it be true, that there is no Succeſſion in God's Knowledge, and the Manner of his Knowledge is to us inconceivable, yet thus much we know concerning it, that there is no Event, paſt, preſent, or to come, that God is ever uncertain of; He never is, never was, and never will be without infallible Knowledge of it; He always ſees the Exiſtence of it to be certain and infallible. And as he always ſees Things juſt as they are in Truth; hence there never is in Reality any Thing contingent in ſuch a Senſe, as that poſſibly it may happen never to exiſt. If, ſtrictly ſpeaking, there is no Foreknowledge in God, 'tis becauſe thoſe Things which are

are future to us, are as present to God, as if they already had Existence: and that is as much as to say, that future Events are always in God's View as evident, clear, sure and necessary, as if they already were. If there never is a Time wherein the Existence of the Event is not present with God, then there never is a Time wherein it is not as much impossible for it to fail of Existence, as if it's Existence were present, and were already come to pass.

God's viewing Things so perfectly and unchangeably as that there is no Succession in his Ideas or Judgment, don't hinder but that there is properly now, in the Mind of God, a certain and perfect Knowledge of the moral Actions of Men, which to us are an Hundred Years hence: yea the Objection supposes this; and therefore it certainly don't hinder but that, by the foregoing Arguments, it is now impossible these moral Actions should not come to pass.

We know, that God knows the future voluntary Actions of Men in such a Sense before-hand, as that he is able particularly to declare, and foretell them, and write them, or cause them to be written down in a Book, as He often has done; and that therefore the necessary Connection which there is between God's Knowledge and the Event known, does as much prove the Event to be necessary before-hand, as if the divine Knowledge were in the same Sense before the Event, as the Prediction or Writing is. If the Knowledge be infallible, then the Expression of it in the written Prediction is infallible; that is, there is an infallible Connection between that written Prediction and the Event. And if so, then it is impossible it should ever be otherwise, than that that Prediction and the Event should agree: And this is the same Thing as to say, 'tis impossible but that the Event should come to pass: and this is the same as to say, that it's coming to pass is necessary.---- So that it is manifest, that there being no proper Succession in God's Mind, makes no Alteration as to the Necessity of the Existence of the Events which God knows. Yea,

2. This is so far from weakening the Proof, which has been given of the Impossibility of the not coming to pass of future Events known, as that it establishes that wherein the Strength of the foregoing Arguments consists, and shews the Clearness of the Evidence. For,

(1.) The

(1.) The very Reason why God's Knowledge is without Succession, is, because it is absolutely perfect, to the highest possible Degree of Clearness and Certainty: all Things, whether past, present or to come, being view'd with equal Evidence and Fulness; future Things being seen with as much Clearness, as if they were present; the View is always in absolute Perfection; and absolute constant Perfection admits of no Alteration, and so no Succession; the actual Existence of the Thing known, don't at all increase, or add to the Clearness or Certainty of the Thing known: God calls the Things that are not, as tho' they were; they are all one to Him as if they had already existed. But herein consists the Strength of the Demonstration before given, of the Impossibility of the not existing of those Things whose Existence God knows; That it is as impossible they should fail of Existence, as if they existed already. This Objection, instead of weakening this Argument, sets it in the clearest and strongest Light; for it supposes it to be so indeed, that the Existence of future Events is in God's View so much as if it already had been, that when they come actually to exist, it makes not the least Alteration or Variation in his View or Knowledge of them.

(2.) The Objection is founded on the *Immutability* of God's Knowledge: For 'tis the Immutability of Knowledge makes his Knowledge to be without Succession. But this most directly and plainly demonstrates the Thing I insist on, *viz.* that 'tis utterly impossible the known Events should fail of Existence. For if that were possible, then it would be possible for there to be a Change in God's Knowledge and View of Things. For if the known Event should fail of Existence, and not come into Being, as God expected, then God would see it, and so would change his Mind, and see his former Mistake; and thus there would be Change and Succession in his Knowledge. But as God is immutable, and so it is utterly and infinitely impossible that his View should be changed; so 'tis, for the same Reason, just so impossible that the fore-known Event should not exist: And that is to be impossible in the highest Degree: and therefore the contrary is necessary. Nothing is more impossible than that the immutable God should be changed, by the Succession of Time; who comprehends all Things, from Eternity to Eternity, in one, most

perfect, and unalterable View; ſo that his whole eternal Duration is *Vitæ interminabilis, tota, ſimul, & perfecta Poſſeſſio.*

On the whole, I need not fear to ſay, that there is no Geometrical Theorem or Propoſition whatſoever, more capable of ſtrict Demonſtration, than that God's certain Preſcience of the Volitions of moral Agents is inconſiſtent with ſuch a Contingence of theſe Events, as is without all Neceſſity; and ſo is inconſiſtent with the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty.

Corol. 2. Hence the Doctrine of the *Calviniſts*, concerning the abſolute Decrees of God, does not at all infer any more *Fatality* in Things, than will demonſtrably follow from the Doctrine of moſt *Arminian* Divines, who acknowledge God's Omniſcience, and univerſal Preſcience. Therefore all Objections they make againſt the Doctrine of the *Calviniſts*, as implying *Hobbes*'s Doctrine of Neceſſity, or the *Stoical* Doctrine of *Fate*, lie no more againſt the Doctrine of *Calviniſts*, than their own Doctrine: And therefore it don't become thoſe Divines, to raiſe ſuch an Out-cry againſt the *Calviniſts*, on this Account.

Corol. 3. Hence all arguing from Neceſſity, againſt the Doctrine of the Inability of unregenerate Men to perform the Conditions of Salvation, and the Commands of God requiring ſpiritual Duties, and againſt the *Calviniſtic* Doctrine of efficacious Grace; I ſay, all Arguings of *Arminians* (ſuch of 'em as own God's Omniſcience) againſt theſe Things, on this Ground, that theſe Doctrines, tho' they don't ſuppoſe Men to be under any Conſtraint or Coaction, yet ſuppoſe 'em under Neceſſity, with Reſpect to their moral Actions, and thoſe Things which are required of 'em in Order to their Acceptance with God; and their arguing againſt the Neceſſity of Men's Volitions, taken from the Reaſonableneſs of God's Commands, Promiſes, and Threatnings, and the Sincerity of his Counſels and Invitations; and all Objections againſt any Doctrines of the *Calviniſts* as being inconſiſtent with human Liberty, becauſe they infer Neceſſity; I ſay, all theſe Arguments and Objections muſt fall to the Ground, and be juſtly eſteem'd vain and frivolous, as coming from them; being maintain'd in an Inconſiſtence with themſelves, and in like Manner levelled againſt their own Doctrine, as againſt the Doctrine of the *Calviniſts*.

SECTION

SECTION XIII.

Whether we suppose the Volitions of moral Agents to be connected with any Thing antecedent, or not, yet they must be necessary in such a Sense as to overthrow Arminian *Liberty.*

EVERY Act of the Will has a Cause, or it has not. If it has a Cause, then, according to what has already been demonstrated, it is not contingent, but necessary; the Effect being necessarily dependent and consequent on it's Cause; and that, let the Cause be what it will. If the Cause is the Will itself, by antecedent Acts choosing and determining; still the *determined* and *caused* Act must be a necessary Effect. The Act that is the determined Effect of the foregoing Act which is it's Cause, can't prevent the Efficiency of it's Cause; but must be wholly subject to it's Determination and Command, as much as the Motions of the Hands and Feet: The consequent commanded Acts of the Will are as passive and as necessary, with Respect to the antecedent determining Acts, as the Parts of the Body are to the Volitions which determine and command them. And therefore, if all the free Acts of the Will are thus, if they are all determined Effects, determined by the Will it self, that is, determined by antecedent Choice, then they are all necessary; they are all subject to, and decisively fixed by the foregoing Act, which is their Cause: Yea, even the determining Act it self; for that must be determined and fixed by another Act, preceding that, if it be a free and voluntary Act; and so must be necessary. So that by this all the free Acts of the Will are necessary, and can't be free unless they are necessary: Because they can't be free, according to the *Arminian* Notion of Freedom, unless they are determined by the Will; which is to be determined by antecedent Choice; which being their Cause, proves 'em necessary. And yet they say, Necessity is utterly inconsistent

ſiſtent with Liberty. So that, by their Scheme, the Acts of the Will can't be free unleſs they are neceſſary, and yet cannot be free if they be ~~not~~ neceſſary!

But if the other Part of the Dilemma be taken, and it be affirm'd that the free Acts of the Will have no Cauſe, and are connected with nothing whatſoever that goes before them and determines them, in order to maintain their proper and abſolute Contingence, and this ſhould be allowed to be poſſible; ſtill it will not ſerve their Turn. For if the Volition comes to paſs by perfect Contingence, and without any Cauſe at all, then it is certain, no Act of the Will, no prior Act of the Soul was the Cauſe, no Determination or Choice of the Soul, had any Hand in it. The Will, or the Soul, was indeed the Subject of what happened to it accidentally, but was not the Cauſe. The Will is not active in cauſing or determining, but purely the paſſive Subject; at leaſt according to their Notion of Action and Paſſion. In this Caſe, Contingence does as much prevent the Determination of the Will, as a proper Cauſe; and as to the Will, it was neceſſary, and could be no otherwiſe. For to ſuppoſe that it could have been otherwiſe, if the Will or Soul had pleaſed, is to ſuppoſe that the Act is dependent on ſome prior Act of Choice or Pleaſure; contrary to what now is ſuppoſed: It is to ſuppoſe that it might have been otherwiſe, if it's Cauſe had made it or ordered it otherwiſe. But this don't agree to it's having no Cauſe or Orderer at all. That muſt be neceſſary as to the Soul, which is dependent on no free Act of the Soul: But that which is without a Cauſe, is dependent on no free Act of the Soul: becauſe, by the Suppoſition, it is dependent on Nothing, and is connected with Nothing. In ſuch a Caſe, the Soul is neceſſarily ſubjected to what Accident brings to paſs, from Time to Time, as much as the Earth, that is inactive, is neceſſarily ſubjected to what falls upon it. But this don't conſiſt with the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty, which is the Will's Power of determining it ſelf in it's own Acts, and being wholly active in it, without Paſſiveneſs, and without being ſubject to Neceſſity.---- Thus, Contingence belongs to the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty, and yet is inconſiſtent with it.

I would here obſerve, that the Author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature*, Page 76, 77. ſays as follows, "The Word *Chance* always means ſome-"thing

" thing done without Design. Chance and Design stand " in direct Opposition to each other: and Chance can " never be properly applied to the Acts of the Will, " which is the Spring of all Design, and which designs " to chuse whatsoever it doth chuse, whether there be any " superiour Fitness in the Thing which it chuses, or no; " and it designs to determine it self to one Thing, where " two Things perfectly equal are proposed, meerly because it " will." But herein appears a very great Inadvertence in this Author. For if *the Will be the Spring of all Design*, as he says, then certainly it is not always the *Effect* of Design; and the Acts of the Will themselves must sometimes come to pass when they don't *spring from* Design; and consequently come to pass by Chance, according to his own Definition of Chance. And if *the Will designs to chuse whatsoever it does chuse*, and *designs to determine it self*, as he says, then it designs to determine all its Designs. Which carries us back from one Design to a foregoing Design determining that, and to another determining that; and so on *in infinitum*. The very first Design must be the Effect of foregoing Design, or else it must be by Chance, in his Notion of it.

Here another Alternative may be proposed, relating to the Connection of the Acts of the Will with something foregoing that is their Cause, not much unlike to the other; which is this: Either human Liberty is such that it may well stand with Volitions being necessarily connected with the Views of the Understanding, and so is consistent with Necessity; or it is inconsistent with, and contrary to such a Connection and Necessity. The former is directly subversive of the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty, consisting in Freedom from all Necessity. And if the latter be chosen, and it be said, that Liberty is inconsistent with any such necessary Connection of Volition with foregoing Views of the Understanding, it consisting in Freedom from any such Necessity of the Will as that would imply; then the Liberty of the Soul consists (in Part at least) in the Freedom from Restraint, Limitation and Government, in it's actings, by the Understanding, and in Liberty and Liableness to act contrary to the Understanding's Views and Dictates: and consequently the more the Soul has of this Disengagedness, in it's acting, the more Liberty. Now let it be considered what this brings the noble Principle of human Liberty to, particularly when it is possessed and enjoyed in it's Perfection,

viz.

viz. a full and perfect Freedom and Liableness to act altogether at Random, without the least Connection with, or Restraint or Government by, any Dictate of Reason, or any Thing whatsoever apprehended, considered or viewed by the Understanding; as being inconsistent with the full and perfect Sovereignty of the Will over it's own Determinations.---- The Notion Mankind have conceived of Liberty, is some Dignity or Privilege, something worth claiming. But what Dignity or Privilege is there, in being given up to such a wild Contingence as this, to be perfectly and constantly liable to act unintelligently and unreasonably, and as much without the Guidance of Understanding, as if we had none, or were as destitute of Perception as the Smoak that is driven by the Wind!

PART

PART III.

Wherein is enquired, whether any such Liberty of Will as Arminians *hold, be neceſſary to* MORAL AGENCY, VERTUE *and* VICE, PRAISE, *and* DISPRAISE, *&c.*

SECTION I.

GOD's moral Excellency *neceſſary, yet vertuous and praiſe-worthy.*

HAVING conſidered the *firſt* Thing that was propoſed to be enquired into, relating to that Freedom of Will which *Arminians* maintain; namely, Whether any ſuch Thing does, ever did, or ever can exiſt, or be conceived of; I come now to the *ſecond* Thing propoſed to be the Subject of Enquiry, *viz.* Whether any ſuch Kind of Liberty be requiſite to moral Agency, Vertue and Vice, Praiſe and Blame, Reward and Puniſhment, *&c.*

I ſhall begin with ſome Conſideration of the Vertue and Agency of the Supream moral Agent, and Fountain of all Agency and Vertue.

Dr. *Whitby*, in his Diſcourſe on the five Points, P. 14. ſays, "If all human Actions are neceſſary, Virtue and Vice muſt "be empty Names; we being capable of Nothing that is "blame-

" blame-worthy, or deserveth Praise; For who can blame " a Person for doing only what he could not help, or judge " that he deserveth Praise only for what he could not avoid?" To the like Purpose he speaks in Places innumerable; especially in his Discourse on the *Freedom of the Will*; constantly maintaining, that a *Freedom not only from Coaction, but Necessity*, is absolutely requisite, in order to Actions being either worthy of Blame, or deserving of Praise. And to this agrees, as is well known, the current Doctrine of *Arminian* Writers; who in general hold, that there is no Vertue or Vice, Reward or Punishment, nothing to be commended or blamed, without this Freedom. And yet Dr. *Whitby*, P. 300, allows, that *God* is without this Freedom; And *Arminians*, so far as I have had Opportunity to observe, generally acknowledge, that God is necessarily holy, and his Will necessarily determined to that which is good.

So that, putting these Things together, the infinitely holy God, who always used to be esteemed by God's People, not only vertuous, but a Being in whom is all possible Vertue, and every Vertue in the most absolute Purity and Perfection, and in infinitely greater Brightness and Amiableness than in any Creature; the most perfect Pattern of Vertue, and the Fountain from whom all others Vertue is but as Beams from the Sun; and who has been supposed to be, on the Account of his Vertue and Holiness, infinitely more worthy to be esteemed, loved, honoured, admired, commended, extoll'd and praised, than any Creature; and He who is thus every where represented in Scripture; I say, this Being, according to this Notion of Dr. *Whitby*, and other *Arminians*, has no Vertue at all; Vertue, when ascribed to Him, is but *an empty Name*; and he is deserving of no Commendation or Praise; because he is under Necessity, He can't avoid being holy and good as he is; therefore no Thanks to him for it. It seems, the Holiness, Justice, Faithfulness, &c. of the most High, must not be accounted to be of the Nature of that which is vertuous and praise-worthy. They will not deny, that these Things in God are good; But then we must understand them, that they are no more vertuous, or of the Nature of any Thing commendable, than the Good that is in any other Being that is not a moral Agent; as the Brightness of the Sun, and the Fertility of the Earth are good, but not vertuous, because these Properties are necessary to these Bodies, and not the Fruit of Self-determining Power.

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There needs no other Confutation of this Notion of God's not being vertuous or praise-worthy, to Christians acquainted with the Bible, but only stating and particularly representing of it. To bring Texts of Scripture, wherein God is represented as in every Respect, in the highest Manner vertuous, and supreamly praise-worthy, would be endless, and is altogether needless to such as have been brought up under the Light of the Gospel.

It were to be wished, that Dr. *Whitby*, and other Divines of the same Sort, had explain'd themselves, when they have asserted that That which is necessary, is *not deserving of Praise*; at the same Time that they have own'd God's Perfection to be necessary, and so in Effect represented God as not deserving Praise. Certainly, if their Words have any Meaning at all, by *Praise*, they must mean the Exercise or Testimony of some Sort of Esteem, Respect, or honourable Regard. And will they then say, that Men are worthy of that Esteem, Respect, and Honour for their Vertue, small and imperfect as it is, which yet God is not worthy of, for his infinite Righteousness, Holiness, and Goodness? If so, it must be because of some Sort of peculiar Excellency in the vertuous Man, which is his Prerogative, wherein he really has the Preference; some Dignity, that is entirely distinguish'd from any Excellency, Amiableness or Honourableness in God; not in Imperfection and Dependance, but in Pre-eminence; which therefore he don't receive from God, nor is God the Fountain or Pattern of it; nor can God, in that Respect, stand in Competition with him, as the Object of Honour and Regard; but Man may claim a peculiar Esteem, Commendation and Glory, that God can have no Pretension to. Yea, God has no Right, by vertue of his necessary Holiness, to intermeddle with that grateful Respect and Praise, due to the vertuous Man, who chuses Vertue, in the Exercise of a Freedom *ad utrumque*; any more than a precious Stone, which can't avoid being hard and beautiful.

And if it be so, let it be explained what that peculiar Respect is, that is due to the vertuous Man, which differs in Nature and Kind, in some Way of Pre-eminence, from all that is due to God. What is the Name or Description of that peculiar Affection? Is it Esteem, Love, Admiration, Honour, Praise, or Gratitude? The Scripture every where represents God as the highest Object of all these: there we read of the *Soul's magnifying the Lord*, of *loving Him with all the*

Heart, with all the Soul, with all the Mind, & with all the Strength; *admiring* him, and *his righteous Acts*, or greatly regarding them, as *marvellous & wonderful*; *honouring*, *glorifying*, *exalting*, *extolling*, *bleſſing*, *thanking*, and *praiſing* Him; *giving unto Him all the Glory* of the Good which is done or received, rather than unto Men; *that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence*; but that He ſhould be regarded as the Being to whom all Glory is due. What then is that Reſpect? What Paſſion, Affection, or Exerciſe is it, that *Arminians* call *Praiſe*, diverſe from all theſe Things, which Men are worthy of for their Vertue, and which God is not worthy of, in any Degree?

If that Neceſſity which attends God's moral Perfections and Actions, be as inconſiſtent with a Being worthy of Praiſe, as a Neceſſity of Coaction; as is plainly implied in or inferred from Dr. *Whitby*'s Diſcourſe; then why ſhould we thank God for his Goodneſs, any more than if He were forced to be good, or any more than we ſhould thank one of our Fellow-Creatures who did us Good, not freely, and of good Will, or from any Kindneſs of Heart, but from meer Compulſion, or extrinſecal Neceſſity? *Arminians* ſuppoſe, that God is neceſſarily a good and gracious Being: for this they make the Ground of ſome of their main Arguments againſt many Doctrines maintain'd by *Calviniſts*: They ſay, theſe are *certainly* falſe, and it is *impoſſible* they ſhould be true, becauſe they are not conſiſtent with the Goodneſs of God. This ſuppoſes, that it is *impoſſible* but that God ſhould be good: for if it be poſſible that He ſhould be otherwiſe, then that Impoſſibility of the Truth of theſe Doctrines ceaſes, according to their own Argument.

That Vertue in God is not, in the moſt proper Senſe, *rewardable*, is not for Want of Merit in his moral Perfections and Actions, ſufficient to deſerve Rewards from his Creatures; but becauſe He is infinitely above all Capacity of receiving any Reward or Benefit from the Creature: He is already infinitely and unchangeably happy, and we can't be profitable unto Him. But ſtill he is worthy of our ſupream Benevolence for his Vertue; and would be worthy of our Beneficence, which is the Fruit and Expreſſion of Benevolence, if our Goodneſs could extend to Him. If God deſerves to be thanked and praiſed for his Goodneſs, He would for the ſame Reaſon, deſerve that we ſhould alſo *requite* his Kindneſs, if that were poſſible. *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits?* is the natural Language of Thankfulneſs:

fulness: and so far as in us lies, it is our Duty to recompense God's Goodness, and *render again according to Benefits received*. And that we might have Opportunity for so natural an Expression of our Gratitude to God, as Beneficence, notwithstanding his being infinitely above our Reach; He has appointed others to be his Receivers, and to stand in his Stead, as the Objects of our Beneficence; such are especially our indigent Brethren.

Section II.

The Acts of the Will of the human Soul of Jesus Christ necessarily holy, *yet truly vertuous, praise-worthy, rewardable,* &c.

I Have already considered how Dr. *Whitby* insists upon it, that a Freedom, not only from Coaction, but Necessity, is *requisite to either Vertue or Vice, Praise or Dispraise, Reward or Punishment*. He also insists on the same Freedom as absolutely requisite to a Person's being the Subject of a *Law*, of *Precepts* or *Prohibitions*; in the Book before mentioned (P. 301, 314, 328, 339, 340, 341, 342, 347, 361, 373, 410.) And of *Promises* and *Threatnings* (P. 298, 301, 305, 311, 339, 340, 363.) And as requisite to *a State of Trial*. (P. 297, &c.)

Now therefore, with an Eye to these Things, I would enquire into the moral Conduct and Practice of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he exhibited in his human Nature here, in his State of Humiliation. And *First*, I would shew, that his holy Behaviour was *necessary*; or that it was *impossible* it should be otherwise, than that He should behave himself holily, and that he should be perfectly holy in each individual Act of his Life. And *Secondly*, that his holy Behaviour was properly of the Nature of *Vertue*, and was *worthy of Praise*; and that He was the Subject of *Law*, *Precepts or Commands*, *Promises and Rewards*; and that he was *in a State of Trial*.

I. It was *impossible*, that the Acts of the Will of the human Soul of Christ should, in any Instance, Degree or Circumstance, be otherwise than holy, and agreable to God's Nature and Will. The following Things make this evident.

1. God had promised so effectually to preserve and uphold Him by his Spirit, under all his Temptations, that he should not fail of reaching the End for which He came into the World; ---which he would have fail'd of, had he fallen into Sin. We have such a Promise, Isai. xlii. 1,2, 3, 4. *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles: He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his Voice to be heard in the Street.---- He shall bring forth Judgment unto Truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set Judgment in the Earth; and the Isles shall wait for his Law.* This Promise of Christ's having God's Spirit put upon Him, and his not crying and lifting up his Voice &c. relates to the Time of Christ's Appearance on Earth; as is manifest from the Nature of the Promise, and also the Application of it in the New Testament, *Matth.* 12. 18. And the Words imply a Promise of his being so upheld by God's Spirit, that he should be preserved from Sin; particularly from Pride and Vain-glory, and from being overcome by any of the Temptations he should be under to affect the Glory of this World; the Pomp of an earthly Prince, or the Applause and Praise of Men: and that he should be so upheld, that he should by no Means fail of obtaining the End of his coming into the World, of bringing forth Judgment unto Victory, and establishing his Kingdom of Grace in the Earth.---And in the following Verses, this Promise is confirmed, with the greatest imaginable Solemnity. *Thus saith the LORD, HE that created the Heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the Earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth Breath unto the People upon it, and Spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called Thee in Righteousness, and will hold thine Hand; and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a Covenant of the People, for a Light of the Gentiles, to open the blind Eyes, to bring out the Prisoners from the Prison, and them that sit in Darkness out of the Prison-House. I am JEHOVAH, that is my Name,* &c.

Very parallel with these Promises is that, *Isai.* xlix. 7, 8, 9. which also has an apparent Respect to the Time of Christ's Humiliation on Earth. *Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his holy One, to Him whom Man despiseth, to Him whom*

whom the Nation abhorreth, to a Servant of Rulers; Kings ſhall ſee and ariſe, Princes alſo ſhall worſhip; becauſe of the Lord that is faithful, and the holy One of Iſrael, *and He ſhall chooſe Thee. Thus ſaith the Lord, In an acceptable Time have I heard Thee; in a Day of Salvation have I helped Thee; and I will preſerve Thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the People, to eſtabliſh the Earth*, &c.

And in *Iſai.* l. 5----9. we have the Meſſiah expreſſing his Aſſurance, that God would help Him, by ſo opening his Ear, or inclining his Heart to God's Commandments, that He ſhould not be rebellious, but ſhould perſevere, and not apoſtatiſe, or turn his Back: That through God's Help, He ſhould be immovable, in a Way of Obedience, under the great Trials of Reproach and Suffering he ſhould meet with; ſetting his Face like a Flint: So that He knew He ſhould not be aſhamed, or fruſtrated in his Deſign; and finally ſhould be approved and juſtified, as having done his Work faithfully. *The Lord hath opened mine Ear; ſo that I was not rebellious, neither turned away my Back: I gave my Back to the Smiters, and my Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair; I hid not my Face from Shame and Spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore ſhall I not be confounded: therefore have I ſet my Face as a Flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed. He is near that juſtifieth me: who will contend with me? Let us ſtand together. Who is mine Adverſary? Let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me: who is He that ſhall condemn me? Lo, they ſhall all wax old as a Garment, the Moth ſhall eat them up.*

2. The ſame Thing is evident from all the Promiſes which God made to the Meſſiah, of his future Glory, Kingdom and Succeſs, in his Office and Character of a Mediator: which Glory could not have been obtained, if his Holineſs had fail'd, and he had been guilty of Sin. God's abſolute Promiſe of any Things makes the Things promiſed *neceſſary*, and their failing to take Place abſolutely *impoſſible*: and in like Manner it makes thoſe Things neceſſary, on which the Thing promiſed depends, and without which it can't take Effect. Therefore it appears, that it was utterly impoſſible that Chriſt's Holineſs ſhould fail, from ſuch abſolute Promiſes as thoſe, Pſal. cx. 4. *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Prieſt forever, after the Order of* Melchizedek. And from every other Promiſe in that Pſalm, contained in each Verſe of it. And *Pſal.* ii. 6, 7.

I will declare the Decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten Thee: Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, &c. Psal. xlv. 3, 4, &c. *Gird thy Sword on thy Thigh, O most Mighty, with thy Glory and thy Majesty; and in thy Majesty ride prosperously.* And so every Thing that is said from thence to the End of the Psalm. And those Promises, *Isai.* lii. 13, 14, 15. & liii. 10, 11, 12. And all those Promises which God makes to the Messiah, of Success, Dominion and Glory in the Character of Redeemer, in *Isai.* Chap. xlix.

3. It was often promised to the Church of God of old, for their Comfort, that God would give them a righteous, sinless Saviour. Jer. xxiii. 5,6. *Behold, the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto* David *a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute Judgment and Justice in the Earth. In his Days shall* Judah *be saved, and* Israel *shall dwell safely. And this is the Name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.* So, Jer. xxxiii.---*I will cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto* David; *and He shall execute Judgment and Righteousness in the Land.* Isai. ix. 6, 7. *For unto us a Child is born;---- Upon the Throne of* David *and of his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with Judgment and Justice, from henceforth, even forever: The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this.* Chap. xi. at the Beginning. *There shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of* Jesse, *and a Branch shall grow out of his Roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,---- The Spirit of Knowledge, and of the Fear of the Lord:---With Righteousness shall He judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity:---- Righteousness shall be the Girdle of his Loins, and Faithfulness the Girdle of his Reins.* Chap. lii. 13. *My Servant shall deal prudently.* Chap. liii. 9. *Because He had done no Violence, neither was Guile found in his Mouth.* If it be impossible, that these Promises should fail, and it be easier for Heaven and Earth to pass away, than for one Jot or Tittle of these Promises of God to pass away, then it was impossible that Christ should commit any Sin. Christ himself signified, that it was impossible but that the Things which were spoken concerning Him should be fulfilled. Luk. xxiv. 44.----*That all Things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of* Moses, *and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me.* Mat. xxvi. 53, 54. *But how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be?* Mark xiv. 49. *But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.* And so the Apostle, Act. i. 16, 17.---- *This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled.*

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4. All the Promises which were made to the Church of old, of the Messiah as a future Saviour, from that made to our first Parents in Paradise, to that which was delivered by the Prophet *Malachi*, shew it to be impossible that Christ should not have persevered in perfect Holiness. The antient Predictions given to God's Church, of the Messiah as a Saviour, were of the Nature of Promises; as is evident by the Predictions themselves, and the Manner of delivering them. But they are expressly, and very often called *Promises* in the New-Testament; as in *Luke* i. 54, 55, 72, 73. *Acts* xiii. 32, 33. *Rom.* i. 1, 2, 3. & Chap. xv. 8. *Heb.* vi. 13, &c. These Promises were often made with great Solemnity, and confirmed with an Oath; as in Gen. xxii. 16. 17. *By my self have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy Seed, as the Stars of Heaven, and as the Sand which is upon the Sea-Shore :---- And in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.* Compare *Luke* i. 72, 73. and *Gal.* iii. 8, 15, 16. The Apostle in *Heb.* vi. 17, 18. speaking of this Promise to *Abraham*, says, *Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew to the Heirs of Promise the Immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath; that by two IMMUTABLE Things, in which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, he might have strong Consolation.* --- In which Words, the *Necessity* of the Accomplishment, or (which is the same Thing) the *Impossibility* of the contrary, is fully declared. So God confirmed the Promise of the great Salvation of the Messiah, made to *David*, by an Oath; Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. *I have made a Covenant with my Chosen, I have sworn unto* David *my Servant; Thy Seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy Throne to all Generations.* There is Nothing that is so abundantly set forth in Scripture, as sure and irrefragable, as this Promise and Oath to *David*. See *Psal.* lxxxix. 34, 35, 36. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5. *Isai.* lv. 3. *Act.* ii. 29, 30. and xiii. 34. The Scripture expressly speaks of it as utterly *impossible* that this Promise and Oath to *David*, concerning the everlasting Dominion of the Messiah of his Seed, should fail. Jer. xxxiii. 15, &c. *In those Days, and at that Time, I will cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto* David.---- *For thus saith the Lord,* David *shall never want a Man to sit upon the Throne of the House of* Israel. ---- ver. 20, 21. *If you can break my Covenant of the Day, and my Covenant of the Night, and that there should not be Day and Night in their Season; then may also my Covenant be broken with* David *my Servant, that He should not have a Son to reign upon his Throne.* So in ver. 25, 26.---- Thus abundant is the Scripture in representing how

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impossible it was, that the Promises made of Old concerning the great Salvation and Kingdom of the Messiah should fail: Which implies, that it was impossible that this Messiah, the second *Adam*, the promised Seed of *Abraham*, and of *David*, should fall from his Integrity, as the first *Adam* did.

5. All the Promises that were made to the Church of God under the Old Testament, of the great Enlargement of the Church, and Advancement of her Glory, in the Days of the Gospel, after the Coming of the Messiah; the Increase of her Light, Liberty, Holiness, Joy, Triumph over her Enemies, *&c.* of which so great a Part of the Old Testament consists; which are repeated so often, are so variously exhibited, so frequently introduced with great Pomp and Solemnity, and are so abundantly sealed with typical and symbolical Representations; I say, all these Promises imply, that the Messiah should perfect the Work of Redemption; and this implies, that he should persevere in the Work which the Father had appointed Him, being in all Things conformed to his Will. These Promises were often confirmed by an Oath. (See *Isai.* liv. 9. with the Context; *Chap.* lxii. 18.) And it is represented as utterly impossible that these Promises should fail. (*Isai.* xlix. 15. with the Context, *Chap.* liv. 10. with the Context; *Chap.* li. 4,---8. *Chap.* xl. 8. with the Context.) And therefore it was *impossible*, that the Messiah should fail, or commit Sin.

6. It was *impossible*, that the Messiah should fail of persevering in Integrity and Holiness, as the first *Adam* did, because this would have been inconsistent with the Promises which God made to the blessed Virgin, his Mother, and to her Husband; implying, that *He should save his People from their Sins*, that *God would give Him the Throne of his Father* David, that *He should reign over the House of* Jacob *forever*; and that *of his Kingdom there should be no End.* These Promises were sure, and it was *impossible* they should fail. And therefore the Virgin *Mary*, in trusting fully to them, acted reasonably, having an immovable Foundation of her Faith; as *Elisabeth* observes, ver. 45. *And blessed is she that believeth; for there shall be a Performance of those Things which were told her from the Lord.*

7. That it should have been possible that Christ should sin, and so fail in the Work of our Redemption, does not consist with the eternal Purpose and Decree of God, reveal'd

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in the Scriptures, that He would provide Salvation for fallen Man in and by Jeſus Chriſt, and that Salvation ſhould be offered to Sinners through the Preaching of the Goſpel. Such an abſolute Decree as this *Arminians* don't deny. Thus much at leaſt (out of all Controverſy) is implied in ſuch Scriptures, as 1 *Cor.* ii. 7. *Eph.* i. 4, 5. and Ch. iii. 9, 10, 11. 1 *Pet.* i. 19, 20. Such an abſolute Decree as this, *Arminians* allow to be ſignified in theſe Texts. And the *Arminians* Election of Nations and Societies, and general Election of the Chriſtian Church, and conditional Election of particular Perſons, imply this. God could not decree before the Foundation of the World, to ſave all that ſhould believe in, and obey Chriſt, unleſs he had abſolutely decreed that Salvation ſhould be provided, and effectually wrought out by Chriſt. And ſince (as the *Arminians* themſelves ſtrenuouſly maintain) a Decree of God infers *Neceſſity*; hence it became *neceſſary* that Chriſt ſhould perſevere, and actually work out Salvation for us, and that He ſhould not fail by the Commiſſion of Sin.

8. That it ſhould have been poſſible for Chriſt's Holineſs to fail, is not conſiſtent with what God promiſed to his Son before all Ages. For, that Salvation ſhould be offered to Men thro' Chriſt, and beſtowed on all his faithful Followers, is what is at leaſt implied in that certain and infallible Promiſe ſpoken of by the Apoſtle, Tit. i. 2. *In hope of eternal Life; which God, that cannot lie, promiſed before the World began.* This don't ſeem to be controverted by *Arminians*. *

9. That it ſhould be poſſible for Chriſt to fail of doing his Father's Will, is inconſiſtent with the Promiſe made to the Father by the Son, by the *Logos* that was with the Father from the Beginning, before he took the human Nature: as may be ſeen in *Pſal.* xl. 6, 7, 8. (compar'd with the Apoſtle's Interpretation, *Heb.* x. 5, --- 9.) *Sacrifice and Offering thou didſt not deſire: mine Ears haſt thou opened*, (or bored;) *Burnt-Offering and Sin-Offering Thou haſt not required. Then ſaid I, Lo, I come: In the Volume of the Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy Will, O my God, and thy Law is within my Heart.* Where is a manifeſt Alluſion to the Covenant which the willing Servant, who loved his Maſter's Service, made with his Maſter, to be his Servant for ever, on

* See Dr. *Whitby* on the five Points, P. 48, 49, 50.

the Day wherein he had his Ear bored; which Covenant was probably inserted in the publick Records, called the *Volume of the Book*, by the Judges, who were called to take Cognizance of the Transaction; *Exod.* xxi. If the *Logos*, who was with the Father, before the World, and who made the World, thus engaged in Covenant to do the Will of the Father in the human Nature, and the Promise, was as it were recorded, that it might be made sure, doubtless it was *impossible* that it should fail; and so it was *impossible* that Christ should fail of doing the Will of the Father in the human Nature.

10. If it was possible for Christ to have failed of doing the Will of his Father, and so to have failed of effectually working out Redemption for Sinners, then the Salvation of all the Saints, who were saved from the Beginning of the World, to the Death of Christ, was not built on a firm Foundation. The Messiah, and the Redemption which He was to work out by his Obedience unto Death, was the Foundation of the Salvation of all the Posterity of fallen Man, that ever were saved. Therefore, if when the Old-Testament Saints had the Pardon of their Sins, and the Favour of God promised them, and Salvation bestowed upon them, still it was possible that the Messiah, when he came, might commit Sin, then all this was on a Foundation that was not firm and stable, but liable to fail; something which it was possible might never be. God did as it were trust to what his Son had engaged and promised to do in future Time; and depended so much upon it, that He proceeded actually to save Men on the Account of it, as tho' it had been already done. But this Trust and Dependance of God, on the Supposition of Christ's being liable to fail of doing his Will, was leaning on a Staff that was weak, and might possibly break. The Saints of old trusted on the Promises of a future Redemption to be wrought out and compleated by the Messiah, and built their Comfort upon it: *Abraham* saw Christ's Day and rejoyced; and he and the other Patriarchs died in the Faith of the Promise of it. (*Heb.* xi. 13.) But on this Supposition, their Faith and their Comfort, and their Salvation, was built on a moveable fallible Foundation; Christ was not to them a tried Stone, a sure Foundation; as in *Isai.* xxviii. 16. *David* entirely rested on the Covenant of God with him, concerning the future glorious Dominion and Salvation of the Messiah, of his Seed; says, it was *all his Salvation, and all his Desire*; and comforts himself that this Covenant was

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an *everlasting Covenant*, *ordered in all Things and sure*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. But if Christ's Vertue might fail, he was mistaken: his great Comfort was not built so sure, as he thought it was, being founded entirely on the Determinations of the Free-Will of Christ's human Soul; which was subject to no Necessity, and might be determined either one Way or the other. Also the Dependance of those who looked for Redemption in *Jerusalem*, and waited for the Consolation of *Israel*, (*Luke* ii. 25. & 38.) and the Confidence of the Disciples of Jesus, who forsook all and followed Him, that they might enjoy the Benefits of his future Kingdom, was built on a sandy Foundation.

11. The Man Christ Jesus, before he had finished his Course of Obedience, and while in the midst of Temptations and Trials, was abundant in positively predicting his own future Glory in his Kingdom, and the Enlargement of his Church, the Salvation of the Gentiles through Him &c. and in Promises of Blessings he would bestow on his true Disciples in his future Kingdom; on which Promises he required the full Dependance of his Disciples. (*Joh.* xiv.) But the Disciples would have had no Ground for such Dependance, if Christ had been liable to fail in his Work: And Christ Himself would have been guilty of Presumption, in so abounding in peremptory Promises of great Things, which depended on a meer Contingence; *viz.* the Determinations of his free Will, consisting in a Freedom *ad utrumque*, to either Sin or Holiness, standing in Indifference, and incident, in Thousands of future Instances, to go either one Way or the other.

Thus it is evident, that it was *impossible* that the Acts of the Will of the human Soul of Christ should be otherwise than holy, and conformed to the Will of the Father; or, in other Words, they were necessarily so conformed.

I have been the longer in the Proof of this Matter, it being a Thing denied by some of the greatest *Arminians*, by *Episcopius* in particular; and because I look upon it as a Point clearly and absolutely determining the Controversy between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, concerning the Necessity of such a Freedom of Will as is insisted on by the latter, in order to moral Agency, Vertue, Command or Prohibition, Promise or Threatning, Reward or Punishment, Praise or Dispraise, Merit or Demerit. I now therefore proceed,

II. To conſider whether CHRIST, in his holy Behaviour on Earth, was not thus a *moral Agent*, ſubject to *Commands*, *Promiſes*, &c.----

Dr. *Whitby* very often ſpeaks of what he calls a Freedom *ad utrumlibet*, without Neceſſity, as requiſite to *Law and Commands*; and ſpeaks of Neceſſity as entirely inconſiſtent with *Injunctions and Prohibitions*. But yet we read of Chriſt's being the Subject of the Commands of his Father, *Joh.* x. 18. and xv. 10. And Chriſt tells us, that every Thing that He *ſaid*, or *did*, was in Compliance with *Commandments he had received of the Father*; Joh. xii. 49, 50. & xiv. 31. And we often read of Chriſt's *Obedience* to his Father's Commands, *Rom.* v. 19. *Phil.* ii. 18. *Heb.* v. 8.

The forementioned Writer repreſents *Promiſes offered as Motives* to Perſons to do their Duty, or *a being moved and induced by Promiſes*, as utterly inconſiſtent with a State wherein Perſons have not a Liberty *ad utrumlibet*, but are neceſſarily determined to one. (See particularly, P. 298. & 311.) But the Thing which this Writer aſſerts, is demonſtrably falſe, if the Chriſtian Religion be true. If there be any Truth in Chriſtianity or the holy Scriptures, the Man Chriſt Jeſus had his Will infallibly, unalterably and unfruſtrably determined to Good, and that alone; but yet he had Promiſes of glorious Rewards made to Him, on Condition of his perſevering in, and perfecting the Work which God had appointed Him; *Iſai.* liii. 10, 11, 12. *Pſal.* ii. & cx. *Iſai.* xlix. 7, 8, 9.--- In *Luke* xxii. 28, 29. Chriſt ſays to his Diſciples, *Ye are They which have continued with me in my Temptations*; *and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* The Word moſt properly ſignifies to appoint by Covenant, or Promiſe. The plain Meaning of Chriſt's Words is this: "As you have partook of my Temptations "and Trials, and have been ſtedfaſt, & have overcome; I pro- "miſe to make you Partakers of my Reward, and to give you a "Kingdom; as the Father has promiſed me a Kingdom "for continuing ſtedfaſt, and overcoming in thoſe Trials." And the Words are well explained by thoſe in Rev. iii. 21. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne; even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne.* And Chriſt had not only Promiſes of glorious Succeſs and Rewards made to his Obedience and Sufferings, but the Scriptures plainly repreſent Him as uſing theſe Promiſes for Motives and Inducements to obey and ſuffer; and particularly

particularly that Promise of a Kingdom which the Father had appointed Him, or sitting with the Father on his Throne; as in Heb. xii. 1,2. *Let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth easily beset us, and let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith; who for the Joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down on the right Hand of the Throne of God.*

And how strange would it be to hear any Christian assert, that the holy and excellent Temper and Behaviour of Jesus Christ, and that Obedience which he performed under such great Trials, was not *vertuous* or *Praise-worthy*; because his Will was not free *ad utrumque*, to either Holiness or Sin, but was unalterably determin'd to one; that upon this Account, there is no Vertue at all, in all Christ's Humility, Meekness, Patience, Charity, Forgiveness of Enemies, Contempt of the World, Heavenly-mindedness, Submission to the Will of God, perfect Obedience to his Commands, (tho' He was obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross) his great Compassion to the Afflicted, his unparallel'd Love to Mankind, his Faithfulness to God and Man, under such great Trials; his praying for his Enemies, even when nailing Him to the Cross; That *Vertue*, when applied to these Things, *is but an empty Name*; That there was no Merit in any of these Things; that is, that Christ was *worthy* of Nothing at all on the Account of them, worthy of no Reward, no Praise, no Honour or Respect from God or Man; Because his Will was not indifferent, and free either to these Things, or the Contrary; but under such a strong Inclination or Bias to the Things that were excellent, as made it *impossible* that he should chuse the contrary; That upon this Account (to use Dr. *Whitby*'s Language) *it would be sensibly unreasonable* that the human Nature should be rewarded for any of these Things.

According to this Doctrine, That Creature who is evidently set forth in Scripture as the *First-born of every Creature*, as having *in all Things the Pre-eminence*, and as the highest of all Creatures in Vertue, Honour, and Worthiness of Esteem, Praise and Glory, on the Account of his Vertue, is less worthy of Reward or Praise, than the very least of Saints; yea, no more worthy than a Clock or meer Machine, that is purely passive, and moved by natural Necessity.

If

If we judge by ſcriptural Repreſentations of Things, we have Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that Chriſt took on him our Nature, and dwelt with us in this World, in a ſuffering State, not only to ſatisfy for our Sins; but that He, being in our Nature and Circumſtances, and under our Trials, might be our moſt fit and proper Example, Leader and Captain, in the Exerciſe of glorious and victorious Vertue, and might be a viſible Inſtance of the glorious End and Reward of it; That we might ſee in Him the Beauty, Amiableneſs, and true Honour and Glory, and exceeding Benefit of that Virtue, which it is proper for us human Beings to practiſe; and might thereby learn, and be animated, to ſeek the like Glory and Honour, and to obtain the like glorious Reward. See *Heb.* ii. 9,----14, with v. 8, 9. and xii. 1, 2, 3. *Joh.* xv. 10. *Rom.* viii. 17. 2 *Tim.* ii. 11. 12. 1 *Pet.* ii. 19, 20. & iv. 13. But if there was Nothing of any Vertue or Merit, or Worthineſs of any Reward, Glory, Praiſe or Commendation at all, in all that He did, becauſe it was all neceſſary, and He could not help it; then how is here any Thing ſo proper to animate and incite us, free Creatures, by patient Continuance in well-doing, to ſeek for Honour, Glory, and Vertue?

God ſpeaks of Himſelf as peculiarly well-pleaſed with the Righteouſneſs of this Servant of his. Iſai. xlii. 21. *The Lord is well pleaſed for his Righteouſneſs ſake.* The Sacrifices of old are ſpoken of as a ſweet Savour to God, but the Obedience of Chriſt as far more acceptable than they. Pſal. xl. 6, 7. *Sacrifice and Offering Thou didſt not deſire: ---- Mine Ear haſt Thou opened* [as thy Servant performing willing Obedience;] *Burnt-Offering and Sin-Offering haſt thou not required: Then ſaid I, Lo, I come* [as a Servant that chearfully anſwers the Calls of his Maſter:] *I delight to do thy Will, O my God, and thy Law is within mine Heart.* Matth. xvii. 5. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.* And Chriſt tells us expreſly, that the Father loves Him for that wonderful Inſtance of his Obedience, his voluntarily yielding himſelf to Death, in Compliance with the Father's Command. Joh. x. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my Life: ----- No Man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of my ſelf ---- This Commandment received I of my Father.*

And if there was no Merit in Chriſt's Obedience unto Death, if it was not worthy of Praiſe, and of the moſt glorious

glorious Rewards, the heavenly Hosts were exceedingly mistaken, by the Account that is given of them, in Rev. v. 8,---12.---*The four Beasts and the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and golden Vials full of Odours*;---- *And they sung a new Song, saying, Thou art WORTHY to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof; for Thou wast slain*, ------ *And I beheld, and I heard the Voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the Beasts, and the Elders, and the Number of them was ten Thousand Times ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands, saying with a loud Voice, WORTHY is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.*

Christ speaks of the eternal Life which He was to receive, as the Reward of his Obedience to the Father's Commandments. Joh. xii. 49, 50. *I have not spoken of my self; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a Commandment what I should say, and what I should speak: And I know that his Commandment is Life everlasting: Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.*---God promises to divide Him a Portion with the great &c. for his being his righteous Servant, for his glorious Vertue under such great Trials & Sufferings. Isai. liii. 11,12. *He shall see of the Travel of his Soul and be satisfied: By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall bear their Iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a Portion with the Great, and he shall divide the Spoil with the Strong, because He hath poured out his Soul unto Death.*---- The Scriptures represent God as rewarding Him far above all his other Servants. Phil. ii. 7, 8, 9. *He took on Him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men: and being found in Fashion as a Man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross: Wherefore GOD also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name above every Name.*---Psal. xlv. 7. *Thou lovest Righteousness, and hatest Wickedness; Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed Thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.*

There is no Room to pretend, that the glorious Benefits bestowed in Consequence of Christ's Obedience, are not properly of the Nature of a Reward. What is a Reward, in the most proper Sense, but a Benefit bestowed in Consequence of something morally excellent in Quality or Behaviour, in Testimony of well-pleasedness in that moral Excellency, and Respect and Favour on that Account? If we

we conſider the Nature of a Reward moſt ſtrictly, and make the utmoſt of it, and add to the Things contained in this Deſcription, proper Merit or Worthineſs, and the Beſtowment of the Benefit in Conſequence of a Promiſe; ſtill it will be found, there is Nothing belonging to it, but that the Scripture is moſt expreſs as to it's belonging to the Glory beſtowed on Chriſt, after his Sufferings; as appears from what has been already obſerved: There was a glorious Benefit beſtowed in Conſequence of ſomething morally excellent, being called *Righteouſneſs* and *Obedience*; There was great Favour, Love and Well-pleaſedneſs, for this Righteouſneſs and Obedience, in the Beſtower; There was proper Merit, or Worthineſs of the Benefit, in the Obedience; It was beſtowed in Fulfilment of Promiſes, made to that Obedience; and was beſtowed *therefor*, or *becauſe* he had performed that Obedience.

I may add to all theſe Things, that Jeſus Chriſt, while here in the Fleſh, was manifeſtly in a State of Trial. The laſt *Adam*, as Chriſt is called, 1 *Cor.* xv. 45. *Rom.* v. 14. taking on Him the human Nature, and ſo the Form of a Servant, and being under the Law, to ſtand and act for us, was put into a State of Trial, as the firſt *Adam* was.----- Dr. *Whitby* mentions theſe three Things as Evidences of Perſons being in a State of Trial (on the five Points, P. 298, 299.) namely, Their Afflictions being ſpoken of as their Trials or Temptations, their being the Subjects of Promiſes, and their being expoſed to Satan's Temptations. But Chriſt was apparently the Subject of each of theſe. Concerning Promiſes made to Him, I have ſpoken already. The Difficulties and *Afflictions* He met with in the Courſe of his Obedience, are called his *Temptations* or *Trials*, Luke xxii. 28. *Ye are they which have continued with me in my* Temptations, *or* Trials. Heb. ii. 18. *For in that he Himſelf hath ſuffered, being* tempted [or tried] *He is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* And Chap. iv. 15. *We have not an High-Prieſt, which cannot be touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities; but was in all Points* tempted *like as we are, yet without Sin.* And as to his being tempted by *Satan*, it is what none will diſpute.

Section III.

The Case of such as are given up of God to Sin, *and of* fallen Man *in general, proves moral Necessity and Inability to be consistent with Blame-worthiness.*

DR. *Whitby* asserts Freedom, not only from Coaction, but Necessity, to be essential to any Thing deserving the Name of *Sin*, and to an Action's being *culpable:* in these Words (Discourse on five Points, Edit. 3. P. 348.) "If they be thus necessitated, then neither their Sins of O-"mission or Commission could deserve that Name; it be-"ing essential to the Nature of Sin, according to St. *Austin*'s "Definition, that it be an Action, *à quo liberum est abstinere.* "Three Things seem plainly necessary to make an Action "or Omission culpable; 1. That it be in our Power to "perform or forbear it: For, as *Origen*, and all the Fa-"thers say, no Man is blame-worthy for not doing what "He could not do."---And elsewhere the Doctor insists, that "when any do Evil of Necessity, what they do is no Vice, "that they are guilty of no Fault, ‖ are worthy of no "Blame, Dispraise, ‡ or Dishonour, † but are unblamea-"ble. *

If these Things are true, in Dr. *Whitby*'s Sense of Necessity, they will prove all such to be blameless, who are given up of God to Sin, in what they commit after they are thus given up.---- That there is such a Thing as Men's being judicially given up to Sin, is certain, if the Scripture rightly informs us; such a Thing being often there spoken of: as in Psal. lxxxi. 12. *So I gave them up to their own Hearts Lust, and they walked in their own Counsels.* Act. vii. 42. *Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the Host of Heaven.* Rom. i. 24. *Wherefore, God also gave them up to Uncleanness, through the Lusts of their own Hearts, to dishonour their own Bodies between Themselves.* Ver. 26. *For this Cause God gave them up to vile Affections.* Ver. 28. *And even as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate Mind, to do those Things that are not convenient.*

'Tis

‖ Disc. on five Poins. P. 347. 360, 361. 377. ‡ 303. 326. 329. and many other Places. † 371. * 304. 361.

'Tis needleſs to ſtand particularly to inquire, what God's *giving Men up to their own Heart's Luſts* ſignifies: It is ſufficient to obſerve, that hereby is certainly meant God's ſo ordering or diſpoſing Things, in ſome Reſpect or other, either by doing or forbearing to do, as that the Conſequence ſhould be Men's continuing in their Sins. So much as Men are given up *to*, ſo much is the Conſequence of their being given up; whether that be leſs or more. If God don't order Things ſo, by Action or Permiſſion, that Sin will be the Conſequence, then the Event proves that they are not given up to that Conſequence. If Good be the Conſequence, inſtead of Evil, then God's Mercy is to be acknowledged in that Good; which Mercy muſt be contrary to God's Judgment in giving up to Evil. If the Event muſt prove that they are given up to Evil as the Conſequence, then the Perſons who are the Subjects of this Judgment, muſt be the Subjects of ſuch an Event, and ſo the Event is neceſſary.

If not only *Coaction*, but *all Neceſſity*, will prove Men blameleſs, then *Judas* was blameleſs, after Chriſt had given him over, and had already declared his certain Damnation, and that he ſhould *verily* betray Him. He was guilty of no Sin in betraying his Maſter, on this Suppoſition; tho his ſo doing is ſpoken of by Chriſt as the moſt aggravated Sin, more heinous than the Sin of *Pilate* in crucifying Him. And the *Jews* in *Egypt*, in *Jeremiah*'s Time, were guilty of no Sin, in their not worſhipping the true God, after God had *Sworn by his great Name, that his Name ſhould be no more named in the Mouth of any Man of* Judah, *in all the Land of* Egypt. Jer. xliv. 26.

Dr. *Whitby* (Diſc. on five Points. P. 302, 303) denies, that Men, in this World, are ever ſo given up by God to Sin, that their Wills ſhould be neceſſarily determined to Evil; tho' He owns, that hereby it may become *exceeding difficult* for Men to do Good, having a ſtrong Bent, and powerful Inclination to what is Evil.---But if we ſhould allow the Caſe to be juſt as he repreſents, the Judgment of giving up to Sin will no better agree with his Notions of that Liberty, which is eſſential to Praiſe or Blame, than if we ſhould ſuppoſe it to render the avoiding of Sin *impoſſible*. For if an *Impoſſibility* of avoiding Sin wholly excuſes a Man; then, for the ſame Reaſon, it's being difficult to avoid it excuſes Him in Part; and this juſt in Proportion to the Degree of Difficulty.---- If the

Influence

Influence of *moral* Impossibility or Inability be the same, to excuse Persons in not doing, or not avoiding any Thing, as that of *natural* Inability, (which is supposed) then undoubtedly, in like Manner, *moral Difficulty* has the same Influence to excuse with *natural Difficulty*. But all allow, that natural Impossibility wholly excuses, and also that *natural Difficulty* excuses in Part, and makes the Act or Omission less blameable, in Proportion to the Difficulty. All *natural Difficulty*, according to the plainest Dictates of the Light of Nature, excuses in some Degree, so that the Neglect is not so blameable, as if there had been no Difficulty in the Case: and so the greater the Difficulty is, still the more excusable, in Proportion to the Increase of the Difficulty. And as *natural* Impossibility wholly excuses and excludes all Blame, so the nearer the Difficulty approaches to Impossibility, still the nearer a Person is to Blamelessness, in Proportion to that Approach. And if the Case of moral Impossibility or Necessity, be just the same with natural Necessity or Co-action, as to Influence to excuse a Neglect, then also, for the same Reason, the Case of natural Difficulty don't differ in Influence, to excuse a Neglect, from moral Difficulty, arising from a strong Bias or Bent to Evil, such as Dr. *Whitby* owns in the Case of those that are given up to their own Hearts Lusts. So that the Fault of such Persons must be lessen'd, in Proportion to the Difficulty, and Approach to Impossibility. If ten Degrees of moral Difficulty make the Action quite impossible, and so wholly excuse, then if there be nine Degrees of Difficulty, the Person is in great Part excused, and is nine Degrees in ten, less blame-worthy, than if there had been no Difficulty at all; and he has but one Degree of Blame-worthiness. The Reason is plain, on *Arminian* Principles; *viz.* because as Difficulty, by antecedent Bent and Bias on the Will, is increased, Liberty of Indifference, and Self-determination in the Will, is diminished: so much Hindrance and Impediment is there, in the Way of the Will's acting freely, by meer Self-determination. And if ten Degrees of such Hindrance take away all such Liberty, then nine Degrees take away nine Parts in ten, and leave but one Degree of Liberty. And therefore there is but one Degree of Blameableness, *cæteris paribus*, in the Neglect; the Man being no further blameable in what He does, or neglects, than he has Liberty in that Affair: For Blame or Praise (say they) arises wholly from a good Use or Abuse of Liberty.

From all which it follows, that a ſtrong Bent and Bias one Way, and Difficulty of going the contrary, never cauſes a Perſon to be at all more expoſed to Sin, or any Thing blameable: Becauſe as the Difficulty is increaſed, ſo much the leſs is required and expected. Tho' in one Reſpect, Expoſedneſs to Sin or Fault is increaſed, *viz.* by an Increaſe of Expoſedneſs to the evil Action or Omiſſion; yet it is diminiſhed in another Reſpect, to ballance it; namely, as the Sinfulneſs or Blameableneſs of the Action or Omiſſion is diminiſhed in the ſame Proportion. So that, on the whole, the Affair, as to Expoſedneſs to Guilt or Blame, is left juſt as it was.

To illuſtrate this, let us ſuppoſe a Scale of a Balance to be intelligent, and a free Agent, and indued with a ſelf-moving Power, by Virtue of which it could act and produce Effects to a certain Degree; *ex. gr.* to move it ſelf up or down with a Force equal to a Weight of ten Pounds; and that it might therefore be required of it, in ordinary Circumſtances, to move it ſelf down with that Force; for which it has Power and full Liberty, and therefore would be blame-worthy if it fail'd of it. But then let us ſuppoſe a Weight of ten Pounds to be put in the oppoſite Scale, which in Force entirely counter-balances it's ſelf-moving Power, and ſo renders it impoſſible for it to move down at all; and therefore wholly excuſes it from any ſuch Motion. But if we ſuppoſe there to be only nine Pounds in the oppoſite Scale, this renders it's Motion not impoſſible, but yet more difficult; ſo that it can now only move down with the Force of one Pound: But however, this is all that is required of it under theſe Circumſtances; it is wholly excuſed from nine Parts of its Motion: And if the Scale, under theſe Circumſtances, neglects to move, and remains at Reſt, all that it will be blamed for, will be it's Neglect of that one tenth Part of it's Motion; which it had as much Liberty and Advantage for, as in uſual Circumſtances, it has for the greater Motion, which in ſuch a Caſe would be required. So that this new Difficulty, don't at all increaſe its Expoſedneſs to any Thing blame-worthy.

And thus the very Suppoſition of Difficulty in the Way of a Man's *Duty*, or Proclivity to Sin, thro' a being given up to Hardneſs of Heart, or indeed by any other Means whatſoever, is an Inconſiſtence, according to Dr. *Whitby*'s Notions of Liberty, Vertue and Vice, Blame and Praiſe. The avoiding Sin and Blame, and the doing what is vertuous and Praiſe-worthy, muſt be always equally eaſy.

Dr.

Dr. *Whitby*'s Notions of Liberty, Obligation, Vertue, Sin, &c. lead Him into another great Inconsistence. He abundantly insists, that Necessity is inconsistent with the Nature of Sin or Fault. He says in the foremention'd Treatise, P. 14. *Who can blame a Person for doing what he could not help?* and P. 15. *It being sensibly unjust, to punish any Man for doing that which it was never in his Power to avoid.* And in P. 341. to confirm his Opinion, he quotes one of the Fathers, saying, *Why doth God command, if Man hath not Free-will and Power to obey?* And again in the same and the next Page, *Who will not cry out, that it is Folly to command him, that hath not Liberty to do what is commanded; and that it is unjust to condemn Him, that has it not in his Power to do what is required?* And in P. 373. He cites another saying, *A Law is given to Him that can turn to both Parts*; i. e. *obey or transgress it: But no Law can be against Him who is bound by Nature.*

And yet the same Dr. *Whitby* asserts, that fallen Man is not able to perform perfect Obedience. In P. 165. He has these Words, "The Nature of *Adam* had Power to continue innocent, and without Sin; whereas it is certain, our Nature "never had so." But if we han't Power to continue innocent and without Sin, then Sin is consistent with Necessity, and we may be sinful in that which we have not Power to avoid; and those Things can't be true, which He asserts elsewhere, namely, "That if we be necessitated, neither Sins of Omission "nor Commission, would deserve that Name. (P. 348.) If we have it not in our Power to be innocent, then we have it not in our Power to be blameless: and if so, we are under a Necessity of being blame-worthy. And how does this consist with what he so often asserts, that Necessity is inconsistent with Blame or Praise? If we have it not in our Power to perform perfect Obedience to all the Commands of God, then we are under a Necessity of breaking some Commands, in some Degree; having no Power to perform so much as is commanded. And if so, why does he cry out of the Unreasonableness and Folly of commanding beyond what Men have Power to do?

And *Arminians* in general are very inconsistent with themselves in what they say of the Inability of fallen Man in this Respect. They strenuously maintain, that it would be unjust in God, to require any thing of us beyond our present Power and Ability to perform; and also hold, that we are now unable to perform perfect Obedience, and that Christ

died

died to satisfy for the *Imperfections of our Obedience*, and has made Way that our imperfect Obedience might be accepted instead of perfect: Wherein they seem insensibly to run themselves into the grossest Inconsistence. For, (as I have observed elsewhere) "They hold that God in Mercy to "Mankind has abolished that rigorous Constitution or Law, "that they were under originally; and instead of it, has introduced a more mild Constitution, and put us under a "new Law, which requires no more than imperfect sincere "Obedience, in Compliance with our poor infirm impotent "Circumstances since the Fall."

Now, how can these Things be made consistent? I would ask what Law these Imperfections of our Obedience are a Breach of? If they are a Breach of no Law that we were ever under, then they are not Sins. And if they be not Sins, what Need of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? But if they are Sins, and the Breach of some Law, what Law is it? They can't be a Breach of their new Law; for that requires no other than imperfect Obedience, or Obedience with Imperfections: And therefore to have Obedience attended with Imperfections, is no Breach of it; for 'tis as much as it requires. And they can't be a Breach of their old Law; for that, they say, is entirely abolished, and we never were under it.--- They say, it would not be just in God to require of us perfect Obedience, because it would not be just to require more than we can perform, or to punish us for failing of it. And therefore, by their own Scheme, the Imperfections of our Obedience don't deserve to be punished. What need therefore of Christ's dying, to satisfy for them? What need of his *Suffering*, to satisfy for that which is no Fault, and in it's own Nature deserves no *suffering?* What need of Christ's dying, to purchase, that our *imperfect* Obedience should be accepted, when according to their Scheme, it would be unjust in it self, that any other Obedience than *imperfect* should be required? What need of Christ's dying to make Way for God's accepting such an Obedience, as it would be unjust in Him not to accept? Is there any Need of Christ's dying, to prevail with God not to do unrighteously?----- If it be said, that Christ died to satisfy that old Law for us, that so we might not be under it, but that there might be Room for our being under a more mild Law; still I would inquire, what Need of Christ's dying that we might not be under a Law, which (by their Principles) it would be in it self unjust that we should be under, whether

ther Chriſt had died or no, becauſe in our preſent State we are not able to keep it?

So the *Arminians* are inconſiſtent with themſelves, not only in what they ſay of the Need of Chriſt's Satisfaction to attone for thoſe Imperfections which we cannot avoid, but alſo in what they ſay of the Grace of God, granted to enable Men to perform the ſincere Obedience of the new Law. "I grant, (ſays Dr. *Stebbing* *) indeed, that "by Reaſon of original Sin, we are utterly diſabled for the "Performance of the Condition, without new Grace from "God. But I ſay then, that He gives ſuch Grace to all of "us, by which the Performance of the Condition is truly "poſſible: And upon this Ground he may, and doth moſt "righteouſly require it." If Dr. *Stebbing* intends to ſpeak properly, by *Grace* he muſt mean, that Aſſiſtance which is of Grace, or of free Favour and Kindneſs. But yet in the ſame Place he ſpeaks of it as very *unreaſonable*, *unjuſt and cruel*, for God to require that, as the Condition of Pardon, that is become impoſſible by original Sin. If it be ſo, what *Grace* is there in giving Aſſiſtance and Ability to perform the Condition of Pardon? Or why is that called by the Name of Grace, that is an abſolute Debt, which God is bound to beſtow, and which it would be unjuſt and cruel in Him to with-hold, ſeeing he requires that, *as the Condition of Pardon*, which we cannot perform without it?

Section IV.

Command, *and* Obligation to Obedience, *conſiſtent with moral Inability to obey.*

IT being ſo much inſiſted on by *Arminian* Writers, that Neceſſity is inconſiſtent with Law or Command, and particularly, that it is abſurd to ſuppoſe God by his Command ſhould require that of Men which they are unable to do; not allowing in this Caſe for any Difference that there is between natural and moral Inability; I would therefore now particularly conſider this Matter.

And

* Treatiſe of the Operations of the Spirit. 2 Edit. P. 112, 113.

And for the greater Clearneſs, I would diſtinctly lay down the following Things.

I. The Will it ſelf, and not only thoſe Actions which are the Effects of the Will, is the proper Object of Precept or Command. That is, ſuch or ſuch a State or Acts of Men's Wills, is in many Caſes, properly required of them by Command; and not only thoſe Alterations in the State of their Bodies or Minds that are the Conſequences of Volition. This is moſt manifeſt; for 'tis the Soul only, that is properly and directly the Subject of Precepts or Commands; that only being capable of receiving or perceiving Commands. The Motions or State of the Body are Matter of Command, only as they are ſubject to the Soul, and connected with it's Acts. But now the Soul has no other Faculty whereby it can, in the moſt direct and proper Senſe, conſent, yield to, or comply with any Command, but the Faculty of the Will; and 'tis by this Faculty only, that the Soul can directly diſobey, or refuſe Compliance: For the very Notions of *Conſenting*, *Yielding*, *Accepting*, *Complying*, *Refuſing*, *Rejecting* &c. are, according to the Meaning of the Terms, Nothing but certain Acts of the Will. Obedience, in the primary Nature of it, is the ſubmitting and yielding of the Will of one to the Will of another. Diſobedience is the not conſenting, not complying of the Will of the commanded to the manifeſted Will of the Commander. Other Acts that are not the Acts of the Will, as certain Motions of the Body and Alterations in the Soul, are Obedience or Diſobedience only indirectly, as they are connected with the State or Actions of the Will, according to an eſtabliſhed Law of Nature. So that 'tis manifeſt, the Will it ſelf may be required: And the Being of a good Will is the moſt proper, direct and immediate Subject of Command; and if this can't be preſcribed or required by Command or Precept, nothing can; For other Things can be required no otherwiſe than as they depend upon, and are the Fruits of a good Will.

Corol. 1. If there be ſeveral Acts of the Will, or a Series of Acts, one following another, and one the Effect of another, the *firſt and determining Act* is properly the Subject of Command, and not only the conſequent Acts, which are dependent upon it. Yea, 'tis this more eſpecially which is that which Command or Precept has a proper Reſpect to; becauſe 'tis this Act that determines the whole Affair: In this Act the Obedience or Diſobedience lies, in a peculiar Manner; the

the conſequent Acts being all ſubject to it, and governed and determined by it. This determining governing Act muſt be the proper Subject of Precept, or none.

Corol. 2. It alſo follows from what has been obſerved, That if there be any Sort of Act, or Exertion of the Soul, prior to all free Acts of the Will or Acts of Choice in the Caſe, directing and determining what the Acts of the Will ſhall be; that Act or Exertion of the Soul can't properly be ſubject to any Command or Precept, in any Reſpect whatſoever, either directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely. Such Acts can't be ſubject to Commands *directly*, becauſe they are no Acts of the Will; being by the Suppoſition prior to all Acts of the Will, determining and giving Riſe to all it's Acts: They not being Acts of the Will, there can be in them no Conſent to, or Compliance with any Command. Neither can they be ſubject to Command or Precept *indirectly* or *remotely*; for they are not ſo much as the *Effects* or *Conſequences* of the Will, being prior to all its Acts. So that if there be any Obedience in that original Act of the Soul, determining all Volitions, it is an Act of Obedience wherein the Will has no Concern at all; it preceeding every Act of Will. And therefore, if the Soul either obeys or diſobeys in this Act, it is wholly involuntarily; there is no willing Obedience or Rebellion, no Compliance or Oppoſition of the Will in the Affair: and what Sort of Obedience or Rebellion is this!

And thus the *Arminian* Notion of the Freedom of the Will conſiſting in the Soul's determining it's own Acts of Will, inſtead of being eſſential to moral Agency, and to Men's being the Subjects of moral Government, is utterly inconſiſtent with it. For if the Soul determines *all* it's Acts of Will, it is therein ſubject to no Command or moral Government, as has been now obſerved; becauſe it's original determining Act is no Act of Will or Choice, it being prior, by the Suppoſition, to *every Act* of Will. And the Soul can't be the Subject of Command in the Act of the Will it ſelf, which depends on the foregoing determining Act, and is determined by it; in as much as this is neceſſary, being the neceſſary Conſequence and Effect of that prior determining Act, which is not voluntary. Nor can the Man be the Subject of Command or Government in his external Actions; becauſe theſe are all neceſſary, being the neceſſary Effects of the Acts of the Will themſelves. So that Mankind, according to this Scheme, are Subjects of Command or moral Government in nothing

at all ; and all their moral Agency is entirely excluded, and no Room left for Vertue or Vice in the World.

So that 'tis the *Arminian* Scheme, and not the Scheme of the *Calviniſts*, that is utterly inconſiſtent with moral Government, and with all Uſe of Laws, Precepts, Prohibitions, Promiſes, or Threatnings. Neither is there any Way whatſoever to make their Principles conſiſt with theſe Things. For if it be ſaid, that there is no prior determining Act of the Soul, preceding the Acts of the Will, but that Volitions are Events that come to paſs by pure Accident, without any determining Cauſe, this is moſt palpably inconſiſtent with all Uſe of Laws and Precepts ; for nothing is more plain than that Laws can be of no Uſe to direct and regulate perfect Accident ; which by the Suppoſition of it's being pure Accident, is in no Caſe regulated by any Thing preceeding ; but happens this Way or that perfectly by Chance, without any Cauſe or Rule. The perfect Uſeleſneſs of Laws and Precepts alſo follows from the *Arminian* Notion of Indifference, as eſſential to that Liberty which is requiſite to Vertue or Vice. For the End of Laws is to *bind to one Side* ; and the End of Commands is to turn the Will one Way : and therefore they are of no Uſe unleſs they turn or bias the Will that Way. But if Liberty conſiſts in Indifference, then their biaſſing the Will one Way only, deſtroys Liberty ; as it puts the Will out of 'Equilibrium. So that the Will, having a Bias, thro' the Influence of binding Law, laid upon it, is not wholly left to it ſelf, to determine it ſelf which Way it will, without Influence from without.

II. Having ſhewn that the Will it ſelf, eſpecially in thoſe Acts which are original, leading and determining in any Caſe, is the proper Subject of Precept and Command, and not only thoſe Alterations in the Body, &c. which are the Effects of the Will ; I now proceed in the *ſecond* Place, to obſerve that the very Oppoſition or Defect of the Will it ſelf, in that Act which is it's *original and determining Act* in the Caſe, I ſay the Will's Oppoſition *in this Act* to a Thing propoſed or commanded, or it's failing of Compliance, implies a moral Inability to that Thing : Or in other Words, whenever a Command requires a certain State or Act of the Will, and the Perſon commanded, notwithſtanding the Command and the Circumſtances under which it is exhibited, ſtill finds his Will oppoſite or wanting, in *that*, belonging to it's State or Acts, *which is original and determining in the Affair*, that Man is morally unable to obey that Command.

This

This is manifeſt from what was obſerved in the firſt Part, concerning the Nature of *moral* Inability, as diſtinguiſhed from *natural:* where it was obſerved, That a Man may then be ſaid to be morally unable to do a Thing, when He is under the Influence or Prevalence of a contrary Inclination, or has a Want of Inclination, under ſuch Circumſtances and Views. 'Tis alſo evident from what has been before proved, that the Will is always, and in every individual Act, neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt Motive; and ſo is always unable to go againſt the Motive, which all Things conſidered, has now the greateſt Strength and Advantage to move the Will.--- But not further to inſiſt on theſe Things, the Truth of the Poſition now laid down, *viz.* That when the Will is oppoſite *to*, or failing of a Compliance with a Thing *in it's original determining Inclination or Act*, it is not able to comply, appears by the Conſideration of theſe two Things.

1. The Will in the Time of that diverſe or oppoſite leading Act or Inclination, and when actually under the Influence of it, is not able to exert itſelf to the contrary, to make an Alteration, in order to a Compliance. The Inclination is unable to change itſelf; and that for this plain Reaſon, that it is unable to incline to change itſelf. Preſent Choice can't at preſent chuſe to be otherwiſe: for that would be *at preſent* to chuſe ſomething diverſe from what is *at preſent* choſen. If the Will, all Things now conſidered, inclines or chuſes to go that Way, then it can't chuſe, all Things now conſidered, to go the other Way, and ſo can't chuſe to be made to go the other Way. To ſuppoſe that the Mind is now ſincerely inclined to change itſelf to a different Inclination, is to ſuppoſe the Mind is now truly inclined otherwiſe than it is now inclined. The Will may oppoſe ſome future remote Act that it is expoſed to, but not its own preſent Act.

2. As it is impoſſible that the Will ſhould comply with the Thing commanded with Reſpect to it's *leading Act*, by any Act of it's own, in the Time of that diverſe or oppoſite *leading and original Act*, or after it is actually come under the Influence of that *determining Choice or Inclination*; ſo 'tis impoſſible it ſhould be determined to a Compliance by any foregoing Act; for by the very Suppoſition, there is no foregoing Act; the oppoſite or non-complying Act being that Act which is *original* and *determining* in the Caſe. Therefore it muſt be ſo, that if this *firſt determining Act* be found non-complying, on the Propoſal of the Command, the Mind is morally unable to obey. For to ſuppoſe it to be able to obey, is to ſuppoſe it to be able to determine and cauſe it's *firſt determining Act* to be otherwiſe,

and that it has Power better to govern and regulate it's *firſt governing and regulating Act*, which is abſurd ; For it is to ſuppoſe a prior Act of the Will, determining it's firſt determining Act ; that is,an Act prior to the firſt, and leading and governing the original and governing Act of all ; which is a Contradiction.

Here if it ſhould be ſaid, that altho' the Mind has not any Ability to will contrary to what it does will, in the original and leading Act of the Will, becauſe there is ſuppoſed to be no prior Act to determine and order it otherwiſe, and the Will can't immediately change it ſelf, becauſe it can't at preſent incline to a Change ; yet the Mind has an Ability for the preſent to *forbear* to proceed to Action, and take Time for Deliberation ; which may be an Occaſion of the Change of the Inclination.

I anſwer, (1.) In this Objection that ſeems to be forgotten which was obſerved before, *viz.* that the determining to take the Matter into Conſideration, is it ſelf an Act of the Will : And if this be all the Act wherein the Mind exerciſes Ability and Freedom, then this, by the Suppoſition, muſt be all that can be commanded or required by Precept. And if this Act be the commanded Act, then all that has been obſerved concerning the commanded Act of the Will remains true, that the very Want of it is a moral Inability to exert it, &c. (2.) We are ſpeaking concerning the firſt and leading Act of the Will in the Caſe, or about the Affair ; And if a Determining to deliberate, or on the contrary, to proceed immediately without deliberating, be the firſt and leading Act ; or whether it be or no,if there be another Act before it, which determines that ; or whatever be the original and leading Act ; ſtill the foregoing Proof ſtands good, that the Non-compliance of the leading Act implies moral Inability to comply.

If it ſhould be objected, that theſe Things make all moral Inability equal, and ſuppoſe Men morally unable to will otherwiſe than they actually do will, in all Caſes, and equally ſo, in every Inſtance.

In anſwer to this Objection, I deſire two Things may be obſerved. *Firſt*, That if by being *equally* unable, be meant as *really* unable ; then ſo far as the Inability is meerly moral, 'tis true, the Will, in every Inſtance, acts by moral Neceſſity,

ceſſity, and is morally unable to act otherwiſe, as truly and properly in one Caſe as another; as, I humbly conceive, has been perfectly and abundantly demonſtrated by what has been ſaid in the preceeding Part of this Eſſay. But yet, in ſome Reſpect, the Inability may be ſaid to be greater in ſome Inſtances than others: Tho' the Man may be truly unable, (if moral Inability can truly be called Inability,) yet he may be further from being able to do ſome Things than others. As it is in Things which Men are naturally unable to do. A Perſon whoſe Strength is no more than ſufficient to lift the Weight of one Hundred Pounds, is as truly and really unable to lift one Hundred and one Pounds, as ten Thouſand Pounds; but yet he is further from being able to lift the latter Weight than the former; and ſo, according to common Uſe of Speech, has a greater Inability for it. So it is in moral Inability. A Man is truly morally unable to chuſe contrary to a preſent Inclination, which in the leaſt Degree prevails; or contrary to that Motive, which, all Things conſidered, has Strength and Advantage now to move the Will, in the leaſt Degree, ſuperiour to all other Motives in View: But yet he is further from Ability to reſiſt a very ſtrong Habit, and a violent and deeply rooted Inclination, or a Motive vaſtly exceeding all others in Strength. And again, the Inability may in ſome Reſpects be called greater, in ſome Inſtances than others, as it may be *more general* and *extenſive to all Acts of that Kind.* So Men may be ſaid to be unable in a different Senſe, and to be further from moral Ability, who have that moral Inability which is *general* and *habitual*, than they who have only that Inability which is *occaſional* and *particular*. † Thus in Caſes of natural Inability; he that is born blind may be ſaid to be unable to ſee, in a different Manner, and is in ſome Reſpects further from being able to ſee, than He whoſe Sight is hinder'd by a tranſient Cloud or Miſt.

And beſides, that which was obſerved in the firſt Part of this Diſcourſe concerning the Inability which attends a *ſtrong and ſettled Habit*, ſhould be here remember'd; *viz.* That fix'd Habit is attended with this peculiar moral Inability, by which it is diſtinguiſhed from *occaſional Volition*, namely, that Endeavours to avoid future Volitions of that Kind, which are agreable to ſuch a Habit, much more frequently and commonly prove vain and inſufficient. For tho' it is impoſſible there

† See this Diſtinction of moral Inability explain'd in PART I. *Sect.* IV.

there ſhould be any true ſincere Deſires and Endeavours againſt a preſent Volition or Choice, yet there may be againſt Volitions of that Kind, when view'd at a Diſtance. A Perſon may deſire and uſe Means to prevent future Exerciſes of a certain Inclination; and in order to it, may wiſh the Habit might be removed; but his Deſires and Endeavours may be ineffectual. The Man may be ſaid in ſome Senſe to be unable; yea, even as the Word *unable* is a *relative Term*, and has Relation to ineffectual Endeavours; yet not with Regard to preſent, but remote Endeavours.

Secondly, It muſt be borne in Mind, according to what was obſerv'd before, that indeed no Inability whatſoever which is meerly moral, is properly called by the Name of *Inability*; and that in the ſtricteſt Propriety of Speech, a Man may be ſaid to have a Thing in his Power, if he has it at his Election; and He can't be ſaid to be unable to do a Thing, when He can if He now pleaſes, or whenever he has a proper, direct and immediate Deſire for it. As to thoſe Deſires and Endeavours that may be againſt the Exerciſes of a ſtrong Habit, with Regard to which Men may be ſaid to be unable to avoid thoſe Exerciſes, they are remote Deſires and Endeavours in two Reſpects. *Firſt*, as to *Time*; they are never againſt preſent Volitions, but only againſt Volitions of ſuch a Kind, when view'd at a Diſtance. *Secondly*, as to their *Nature*; theſe oppoſite Deſires are not directly and properly againſt the Habit and Inclination itſelf, or the Volitions in which it is exerciſed; for theſe, in themſelves conſidered, are agreable; but againſt ſomething elſe, that attends them, or is their Conſequence; the Oppoſition of the Mind is levelled entirely againſt this; the Inclination or Volitions themſelves are not at all oppoſed directly, and for their own ſake; but only indirectly, and remotely on the Account of ſomething aliene and foreign.

III. Tho' the Oppoſition of the Will it ſelf, or the very want of Will to a Thing commanded, implies a moral Inability to that Thing; yet, if it be as has been already ſhewn, that the Being of a good State or Act of Will, is a Thing moſt properly required by Command; then, in ſome Caſes ſuch a State or Act of Will may properly be required, which at preſent is not, and which may alſo be wanting after it is commanded. And therefore thoſe Things may properly be commanded, which Men have a moral Inability for.

Such

Such a State or Act of the Will, may be required by Command, as does not already exist. For if that Volition only may be commanded to be which already is, there could be no use of Precept; Commands in all Cases would be perfectly vain and impertinent. And not only may such a Will be required as is wanting before the Command is given, but also such as may possibly be wanting afterwards; such as the Exhibition of the Command may not be effectual to produce or excite. Otherwise, no such Thing as Disobedience to a proper and rightful Command is possible in any Case; and there is no Case supposable or possible, wherein there can be an inexcusable or faulty Disobedience. Which *Arminians* cannot affirm, consistently with their Principles: for this makes Obedience to just and proper Commands always *necessary*, and Disobedience impossible. And so the *Arminian* would overthrow Himself, yielding the very Point we are upon, which He so strenuously denies, *viz.* that Law and Command are consistent with Necessity.

If meerly that Inability will excuse Disobedience, which is implied in the Opposition or Defect of Inclination, remaining after the Command is exhibited, then Wickedness always carries that in it which excuses it. 'Tis evermore so, that by how much the more Wickedness there is in a Man's Heart, by so much is his Inclination to Evil the stronger, and by so much the more therefore has he of moral Inability to the Good required. His moral Inability, consisting in the Strength of his evil Inclination, is the very Thing wherein his Wickedness consists; and yet according to *Arminian* Principles, it must be a Thing inconsistent with Wickedness; and by how much the more he has of it, by so much is he the further from Wickedness.

Therefore, on the whole, it is manifest, that moral Inability alone (which consists in Disinclination) never renders any Thing improperly the subject-matter of Precept or Command, and never can excuse any Person in Disobedience, or Want of Conformity to a Command.

Natural Inability, arising from the Want of natural Capacity, or external Hindrance (which alone is properly called Inability) without doubt wholly excuses, or makes a Thing improperly the Matter of Command. If Men are excused from doing or acting any good Thing, supposed to be commanded, it must be through some Defect or Obstacle that is

not

not in the Will itſelf, but extrinſic to it ; either in the Capacity of Underſtanding, or Body, or outward Circumſtances.

Here two or three Things may be obſerved,

1. As to ſpiritual Duties or Acts, or any good Thing in the State or immanent Acts of the Will it ſelf, or of the Affections (which are only certain Modes of the Exerciſe of the Will) if Perſons are juſtly excuſed, it muſt be thro' want of Capacity in the natural Faculty of Underſtanding. Thus the ſame ſpiritual Duties, or holy Affections and Exerciſes of Heart, can't be required of Men, as may be of Angels ; the Capacity of Underſtanding being ſo much inferiour. So Men can't be required to love thoſe amiable Perſons whom they have had no Opportunity to ſee, or hear of, or come to the Knowledge of, in any Way agreable to the natural State and Capacity of the human Underſtanding. But the Inſufficiency of Motives will not excuſe ; unleſs their being inſufficient ariſes not from the moral State of the Will or Inclination it ſelf, but from the State of the natural Underſtanding. The great Kindneſs and Generoſity of another may be a Motive inſufficient to excite Gratitude in the Perſon that receives the Kindneſs, thro' his vile and ungrateful Temper : In this Caſe, the Inſufficiency of the Motive ariſes from the State of the Will or Inclination of Heart, and don't at all excuſe. But if this Generoſity is not ſufficient to excite Gratitude, being unknown, there being no Means of Information adequate to the State and Meaſure of the Perſon's Faculties, this Inſufficiency is attended with a natural Inability, which entirely excuſes.

2. As to ſuch Motions of Body, or Exerciſes and Alterations of Mind, which don't conſiſt in the immanent Acts or State of the Will it ſelf, but are ſuppoſed to be required as Effects of the Will ; I ſay, in ſuch ſuppoſed Effects of the Will, in Caſes wherein there is no Want of a Capacity of Underſtanding ; that Inability, and that only excuſes, which conſiſts in Want of Connection between them and the Will. If the Will fully complies, and the propoſed Effect don't prove, according to the Laws of Nature, to be connected with his Volition, the Man is perfectly excuſed ; he has a natural Inability to the Thing required. For the Will itſelf, as has been obſerved, is all that can be directly and immediately required by Command; and other Things only indirectly, as connected with the Will. If therefore there be a full Compliance of Will, the Perſon has

has done his Duty; and if other Things don't prove to be connected with his Volition, that is not owing to him.

3. Both these Kinds of natural Inability that have been mentioned, and so all Inability that excuses, may be resolved into one Thing; namely, Want of natural Capacity or Strength; either Capacity of Understanding, or external Strength. For when there are external Defects and Obstacles, they would be no Obstacles, were it not for the Imperfection and Limitations of Understanding and Strength.

Corol. If Things for which Men have a moral Inability, may properly be the Matter of Precept or Command, then they may also of Invitation and Counsel. Commands, and Invitations come very much to the same Thing; the Difference is only circumstantial: Commands are as much a Manifestation of the Will of him that speaks, as Invitations, and as much Testimonies of Expectation of Compliance. The Difference between them lies in nothing that touches the Affair in Hand. The main Difference between Command and Invitation consists in the Enforcement of the Will of Him who commands or invites. In the latter it is his *Kindness*, the Goodness which his Will arises from: in the former it is his *Authority*. But whatever be the Ground of the Will of him that speaks, or the Enforcement of what he says, yet seeing neither his Will nor Expectation is any more testified in the one Case than the other; therefore a Person's being known to be morally unable to do the Thing to which he is directed *by Invitation*, is no more an Evidence of Insincerity in him that directs, in manifesting either a Will, or Expectation which he has not, than his being known to be morally unable to do what he is directed to *by Command*.----So that all this grand Objection of *Arminians* against the Inability of fallen Men to exert Faith in Christ, or to perform other spiritual Gospel-Duties, from the Sincerity of God's Counsels and Invitations, must be without Force.

Section V.

That Sincerity of Deſires and Endeavours, *which is ſuppoſed to* excuſe *in the Non-performance of Things in themſelves good, particularly conſidered.*

THIS what is much inſiſted on by many, that ſome Men, tho' they are not able to perform ſpiritual Duties, ſuch as Repentance of Sin, Love to God, a cordial Acceptance of Chriſt as exhibited and offer'd in the Goſpel, &c. yet they may ſincerely deſire and endeavour theſe Things; and therefore muſt be excuſed; it being unreaſonable to blame 'em for the Omiſſion of thoſe Things which they ſincerely deſire and endeavour to do, but can't do.

Concerning this Matter, the following Things may be obſerved.

1. What is here ſuppoſed, is a great Miſtake, and groſs Abſurdity; even that Men may ſincerely chuſe and deſire thoſe ſpiritual Duties of Love, Acceptance, Choice, Rejection &c. conſiſting in the Exerciſe of the Will it ſelf, or in the Diſpoſition and Inclination of the Heart; and yet not be able to perform or exert them. This is abſurd, becauſe 'tis abſurd to ſuppoſe that a Man ſhould directly, properly and ſincerely incline to have an Inclination, which at the ſame Time is contrary to his Inclination: for that is to ſuppoſe him not to be inclined to that which he is inclined to. If a Man, in the State and Acts of his Will and Inclination, does properly and directly fall in with thoſe Duties, he therein performs 'em: For the Duties themſelves conſiſt in that very Thing; they conſiſt in the State and Acts of the Will being ſo formed and directed. If the Soul properly and ſincerely falls in with a certain propoſed Act of Will or Choice, the Soul therein makes that Choice it's own. Even as when a moving Body falls in with a propoſed Direction of its Motion, that is the ſame Thing as to move in that Direction.

2. That

2. That which is called a *Desire* and *Willingness* for those inward Duties, in such as don't perform them, has respect to these Duties only indirectly and remotely, and is improperly represented as a Willingness for them; not only because (as was observed before) it respects those good Volitions only in a distant View, and with respect to future Time; but also because evermore, not these Things themselves, but something else, that is aliene and foreign, is the Object that terminates these Volitions and Desires.

A Drunkard, who continues in his Drunkenness, being under the Power of a Love, and violent Appetite to strong Drink, and without any Love to Vertue; but being also extreamly covetous and close, and very much exercised and grieved at the Diminution of his Estate, and Prospect of Poverty, may in a Sort *desire* the Vertue of Temperance: and tho' his present Will is to gratify his extravagant Appetite, yet he may wish he had a Heart to forbear future Acts of Intemperance, and forsake his Excesses, thro' an Unwillingness to part with his Money: But still he goes on with his Drunkenness; his Wishes and Endeavours are insufficient and ineffectual: Such a Man has no proper, direct, sincere Willingness to forsake this Vice, and the vicious Deeds which belong to it: for He acts voluntarily in continuing to drink to excess: His Desire is very improperly called a Willingness to be temperate; it is no true Desire of that Vertue; for it is not that Vertue that terminates his Wishes; nor have they any direct Respect at all to it. 'Tis only *the saving his Money*, and avoiding Poverty, that terminates, and exhausts the whole Strength of his Desire. The Vertue of Temperance is regarded only very indirectly and improperly, even as a necessary Means of gratifying the Vice of Covetousness.

So, a Man of an exceeding corrupt and wicked Heart, who has no Love to God and Jesus Christ, but on the contrary, being very profanely and carnally inclined, has the greatest Distaste of the Things of Religion, and Enmity against 'em; yet being of a Family, that from one Generation to another, have most of 'em died in Youth of an hereditary Consumption; & so having little Hope of living long; and having been instructed in the Necessity of a supream Love to Christ, and Gratitude for his Death and Sufferings, in Order to his Salvation from eternal Misery; if under these Circumstances he should, thro' Fear of eternal Torments, wish he had such a Disposition: But his profane and carnal Heart remaining, He

continues ſtill in his habitual diſtaſte *of*, and Enmity *to* God and Religion, and wholly without any Exerciſe of that Love and Gratitude, (as doubtleſs the very Devils themſelves, notwithſtanding all the Deviliſhneſs of their Temper, would wiſh for a holy Heart, if by that Means they could get out of Hell :) In this Caſe, there is no ſincere Willingneſs to love Chriſt and chuſe him as his chief Good : Theſe holy Diſpoſitions and Exerciſes are not at all the direct Object of the Will : they truly ſhare no Part of the Inclination or Deſire of the Soul ; but all is terminated on Deliverance from Torment : and theſe Graces and pious Volitions, notwithſtanding this forced Conſent, are looked upon undeſirable ; as when a ſick Man deſires a Doſe he greatly abhors, to ſave his Life.---- From theſe Things it appears.

3. That this indirect Willingneſs which has been ſpoken of, is not that Exerciſe of the Will which the Command requires ; but is entirely a different one ; being a Volition of a different Nature, and terminated altogether on different Objects ; wholly falling ſhort of that Vertue of Will, which the Command has reſpect to.

4. This other Volition, which has only ſome indirect Concern with the Duty required, can't excuſe for the Want of that good Will it ſelf, which is commanded ; being not the Thing which anſwers and fulfils the Command, and being wholly deſtitute of the Vertue which the Command ſeeks.

Further to illuſtrate this Matter.---- If a Child has a moſt excellent Father, that has ever treated him with fatherly Kindneſs and Tenderneſs, and has every Way in the higheſt Degree merited his Love and dutiful Regard, being withal very wealthy ; but the Son is of ſo vile a Diſpoſition, that He inveterately hates his Father ; and yet, apprehending that his Hatred of Him is like to prove his Ruin, by bringing Him finally to Poverty and abject Circumſtances, thro' his Father's diſinheriting Him, or otherwiſe ; which is exceeding croſs to his Avarice and Ambition ; He therefore wiſhes it were otherwiſe : but yet remaining under the invincible Power of his vile and malignant Diſpoſition, He continues ſtill in his ſettled Hatred of his Father. Now if ſuch a Son's indirect Willingneſs to have Love and Honour towards his Father, at all acquits or excuſes before God, for his failing of actually exerciſing theſe Diſpoſitions towards Him which God requires, it muſt be on one of theſe two Accounts. (1.) Either that

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it answers and fulfils the Command. But this it does not, by the Supposition; because the Thing commanded is Love and Honour to his worthy Parent. If the Command be proper and just, as is supposed, then it obliges to the Thing commanded; and so nothing else but that can answer the Obligation. Or, (2.) It must be at least because there is that Vertue or Goodness in his indirect Willingness, that is equivalent to the Vertue required; and so balances or countervails it, and makes up for the Want of it. But that also is contrary to the Supposition. The Willingness the Son has merely from a Regard to Money and Honour, has no Goodness in it, to countervail the Want of the pious filial Respect required.

Sincerity and Reality, in that indirect Willingness which has been spoken of, don't make it the better. That which is real and hearty is often called sincere; whether it be in Vertue or Vice. Some Persons are sincerely *bad*; others are sincerely *good*; and others may be sincere and hearty in Things which are in their own Nature *indifferent*; as a Man may be sincerely desirous of eating when he is hungry. But a being sincere, hearty and in good Earnest, is no Vertue, unless it be in a Thing that is vertuous. A Man may be sincere and hearty in joining a Crew of Pirates, or a Gang of Robbers. When the Devils cried out, and besought Christ not to torment them, it was no mere Pretence; they were very hearty in their Desires not to be tormented: but this did not make their Will or Desires vertuous. And if Men have sincere Desires, which are in their Kind and Nature no better, it can be no Excuse for the want of any required Vertue.

And as a Man's being sincere in such an indirect Desire or *Willingness* to do his Duty, as has been mention'd, can't excuse for the want of Performance; so it is with *Endeavours* arising from such a Willingness. The Endeavours can have no more Goodness in 'em, than the Will which they are the Effect and Expression of. And therefore, however sincere and real, and however great a Person's Endeavours are; yea, tho' they should be to the utmost of his Ability; unless the Will which they proceed from be truly good and vertuous, they can be of no Avail, Influence or Weight to any Purpose whatsoever, in a moral Sense or Respect. That which is not truly vertuous in God's Sight, is looked upon by Him as good for Nothing: and so can be of no Value, Weight or Influence

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in his Account, to recommend, satisfy, excuse or make up for any moral Defect. For nothing can counter-balance Evil, but Good. If Evil be in one Scale, and we put a great deal into the other, sincere and earnest Desires, and many and great Endeavours; yet if there be no real Goodness in all, there is no Weight in it; and so it does nothing towards balancing the real Weight which is in the opposite Scale. Tis only like the substracting a Thousand Noughts from before a real Number, which leaves the Sum just as it was.

Indeed such Endeavours may have a *negatively* good Influence. Those Things which have no positive Vertue, have no positive moral Influence; yet they may be an Occasion of Persons avoiding some positive Evils. As if a Man were in the Water with a Neighbour that he had ill-will to, who could not swim, holding him by his Hand; which Neighbour was much in Debt to Him; and should be tempted to let him sink and drown; but should refuse to comply with the Temptation; not from Love to his Neighbour, but from the Love of Money, and because by his drowning He should lose his Debt; that which he does in preserving his Neighbour from drowning, is nothing good in the Sight of God: Yet hereby he avoids the greater Guilt that would have been contracted, if he had designedly let his Neighbour sink and perish. But when *Arminians* in their Disputes with *Calvinists* insist so much on sincere Desires and Endeavours, as what must excuse Men, must be accepted of God &c. 'tis manifest they have Respect to some positive moral Weight or Influence of those Desires and Endeavours. Accepting, justifying, or excusing on the Account of sincere honest Endeavours (as they are called) and Men's doing what they can, &c. has Relation to some moral Value, something that is accepted as Good, and as such, countervailing some Defect.

But there is a great and unknown Deceit, arising from the Ambiguity of the Phrase, *sincere Endeavours*. Indeed there is a vast Indistinctness & Unfixedness in most, or at least very many of the Terms used to express Things pertaining to moral and spiritual Matters. Whence arise innumerable Mistakes, strong Prejudices, inextricable Confusion, and endless Controversy.

The Word *sincere* is most commonly used to signify something that is good: Men are habituated to understand by it the same as *honest* and *upright*; which Terms excite an Idea of something good in the strictest and highest Sense; good in the

the Sight of Him who sees not only the outward Appearance, but the Heart. And therefore Men think that if a Person be *sincere*, he will certainly be accepted. If it be said that any one is sincere in his Endeavours, this suggests to Men's Minds as much, as that his Heart and Will is good, that there is no Defect of Duty, as to vertuous Inclination; he *honestly* and *uprightly* desires and endeavours to do as he is required; and this leads 'em to suppose that it would be very hard and unreasonable to punish him, only because he is unsuccessful in his Endeavours, the Thing endeavoured being beyond his Power.----Whereas it ought to be observed, that the Word *sincere* has these different Significations.

1. *Sincerity*, as the Word is sometimes used, signifies no more then *Reality of Will and Endeavour*, with respect to any Thing that is professed or pretended; without any Consideration of the Nature of the Principle or Aim, whence this real Will and true Endeavour arises. If a Man has some real Desire to obtain a Thing, either direct or indirect, or does really endeavour after a Thing, he is said sincerely to desire or endeavour it; without any Consideration of the Goodness or Vertuousness of the Principle he acts from, or any Excellency or Worthiness of the End he acts for. Thus a Man that is kind to his Neighbour's Wife, who is sick and languishing, and very helpful in her Case, makes a Shew of desiring and endeavouring her Restoration to Health and Vigour; and not only makes such a Shew, but there is a Reality in his Pretence, he does heartily and earnestly desire to have her Health restored, and uses his true and utmost Endeavours for it; He is said sincerely to desire and endeavour it, because he does so truly or really; tho' perhaps the Principle he acts from, is no other than a vile and scandalous Passion; having lived in Adultery with her, he earnestly desires to have her Health and Vigour restored, that he may return to his criminal Pleasures with her. Or,

2. By *Sincerity* is meant, not meerly a *Reality* of Will and Endeavour of some Sort or other, and from some Consideration or other, but a *vertuous Sincerity*. That is, that in the Performance of those particular Acts that are the Matter of Vertue or Duty, there be not only the Matter, but the Form and Essence of Vertue, consisting in the Aim that governs the Act, and the Principle exercised in it. There is not only the Reality of the Act, that is as it were the *Body* of the Duty; but also the *Soul*, which should properly belong to such a Body.

Body. In this Senſe, a Man is ſaid to be ſincere, when he acts with a *pure Intention*; not from ſiniſter Views, or bye-Ends: He not only in Reality deſires and ſeeks the Thing to be done, or Qualification to be obtain'd, for ſome End or other; But he wills the Thing directly and properly, as neither forced nor bribed; the Vertue of the Thing is properly the Object of the Will.

In the former Senſe, a Man is ſaid to be ſincere, in Oppoſition to a meer Pretence, and *Shew of the particular Thing to be done or exhibited*, without any real Deſire or Endeavour at all. In the latter Senſe, a Man is ſaid to be ſincere, in Oppoſition to that *Shew of Vertue there is in meerly doing the Matter of Duty*, without the Reality of the Vertue it ſelf in the Soul, and the Eſſence of it, which there is a Shew of. A Man may be ſincere in the former Senſe, and yet in the latter be in the Sight of God, who ſearches the Heart, a vile Hypocrite.

In the latter Kind of Sincerity, only, is there any Thing truly valuable or acceptable in the Sight of God. And this is the Thing which in Scripture is called *Sincerity*, *Uprightneſs*, *Integrity*, *Truth in the inward Parts*, and a *being of a perfect Heart*. And if there be ſuch a Sincerity, and ſuch a Degree of it as there ought to be, and there be any Thing further that the Man is not able to perform, or which don't prove to be connected with his ſincere Deſires and Endeavours, the Man is wholly excuſed and acquitted in the Sight of God; His Will ſhall ſurely be accepted for his Deed: And ſuch a ſincere Will and Endeavour is all that in Strictneſs is required of him, by any Command of God. But as to the other Kind of Sincerity of Deſires and Endeavours, it having no Vertue in it, (as was obſerved before) can be of no Avail before God, in any Caſe, to recommend, ſatisfy, or excuſe, and has no poſitive moral Weight or Influence whatſoever.

Corol. 1. Hence it may be infer'd, that Nothing in the Reaſon and Nature of Things appears, from the Conſideration of any moral Weight of that former Kind of Sincerity, which has been ſpoken of, at all obliging us to believe, or leading us to ſuppoſe, that God has made any poſitive Promiſes of Salvation, or Grace, or any ſaving Aſſiſtance, or any ſpiritual Benefit whatſoever, to any Deſires, Prayers, Endeavours, Striving, or Obedience of thoſe, who hitherto have no true Vertue or Holineſs in their Hearts; tho' we ſhould ſuppoſe all

all the Sincerity, and the utmoſt Degree of Endeavour, that is poſſible to be in a Perſon without Holineſs.

Some object againſt God's requiring, as the Condition of Salvation, thoſe holy Exerciſes, which are the Reſult of a ſupernatural Renovation; ſuch as a ſupream Reſpect to Chriſt, Love to God, loving Holineſs for it's own ſake, &c. that theſe inward Diſpoſitions and Exerciſes are above Men's Power, as they are by Nature; and therefore that we may conclude, that when Men are brought to be ſincere in their Endeavours, and do as well as they can, they are accepted; and that this muſt be all that God requires in order to Men's being received as the Objects of his Favour, and muſt be what God has appointed as the Condition of Salvation. Concerning which I would obſerve, that in ſuch a Manner of Speaking of *Men's being accepted, becauſe they are ſincere, and do as well as they can*, there is evidently a Suppoſition of ſome Vertue, ſome Degree of that which is truly Good; tho' it don't go ſo far as were to be wiſh'd. For if Men *do what they can*, unleſs their ſo doing be from ſome good Principle, Diſpoſition, or Exerciſe of Heart, ſome vertuous Inclination or Act of the Will; their ſo doing what they can, is in ſome Reſpects not a Whit better than if they did Nothing at all. In ſuch a Caſe, there is no more poſitive moral Goodneſs in a Man's doing what he can, than in a Wind-Mill's doing what it can; becauſe the Action does no more proceed from Vertue; and there is Nothing in ſuch Sincerity of Endeavour, or doing what we can, that ſhould render it any more a proper or fit Recommendation to poſitive Favour and Acceptance, or the Condition of any Reward or actual Benefit, than doing Nothing; for both the one and the other are alike Nothing, as to any true moral Weight or Value.

Corol. 2. Hence alſo it follows, there is Nothing that appears in the Reaſon and Nature of Things, which can juſtly lead us to determine, that God will certainly give the neceſſary Means of Salvation, or ſome Way or other beſtow true Holineſs and eternal Life on thoſe *Heathen*, who are ſincere (in the Senſe above explained) in their Endeavours to find out the Will of the Deity, and to pleaſe Him, according to their Light, that they may eſcape his future Diſpleaſure and Wrath, and obtain Happineſs in their future State, through his Favour.

Section VI.

Liberty of Indifference, *not only not necessary to* Vertue, *but utterly inconsistent with it; And all, either vertuous or vicious* Habits or Inclinations, *inconsistent with* Arminian *Notions of Liberty and moral Agency.*

TO suppose such a Freedom of Will, as *Arminians* talk of, to be requisite to Vertue and Vice, is many Ways contrary to common Sense.

If Indifference belongs to Liberty of Will, as *Arminians* suppose, and it be essential to a vertuous Action that it be performed in a State of Liberty, as they also suppose; it will follow, that it is essential to a vertuous Action that it be performed in a State of Indifference: And if it be performed in a *State* of Indifference, then doubtless it must be performed in the *Time* of Indifference. And so it will follow, that in order to the Vertuousness of an Act, the Heart must be indifferent in the Time of the Performance of that Act, and the more indifferent and cold the Heart is with Relation to the Act which is performed, so much the better; because the Act is performed with so much the greater Liberty. But is this agreable to the Light of Nature? Is it agreable to the Notions which Mankind, in all Ages, have of Vertue, that it lies in that which is contrary to Indifference, even in the *Tendency* and *Inclination* of the Heart to vertuous Action; and that the stronger the Inclination, and so the further from Indifference, the more vertuous the *Heart*, and so much the more praise-worthy the *Act* which proceeds from it?

If we should suppose (contrary to what has been before demonstrated) that there may be an Act of Will in a State of Indifference; for Instance, this Act, *viz.* The Will's determining to put it self out of a State of Indifference, and give it self a Preponderation one Way, then it would follow, on *Arminian*

nian Principles, that this Act or Determination of the Will is that alone wherein Vertue consists, because this only is performed while the Mind remains in a State of Indifference, and so in a State of Liberty: For when once the Mind is put out of it's Equilibrium, it is no longer in such a State; and therefore all the Acts which follow afterwards, proceeding from Bias, can have the Nature neither of Vertue nor Vice. Or if the Thing which the Will can do, while yet in a State of Indifference, and so of Liberty, be only to suspend acting, and determine to take the Matter into Consideration, then this Determination is that alone wherein Vertue consists, and not proceeding to Action after the Scale is turned by Consideration. So that it will follow from these Principles, all that is done after the Mind, by any Means, is once out of it's Equilibrium and already possessed by an Inclination, and arising from that Inclination, has nothing of the Nature of Vertue or Vice, and is worthy of neither Blame nor Praise. But how plainly contrary is this to the universal Sense of Mankind, and to the Notion they have of sincerely vertuous Actions? Which is, that they are Actions which proceed from a Heart *well disposed* and *inclined*; and the *stronger*, and the more *fix'd* and *determined* the good Disposition of the Heart, the greater the Sincerity of Vertue, and so the more of the Truth and Reality of it. But if there be any Acts which are done in a State of Equilibrium, or spring immediately from perfect Indifference and Coldness of Heart, they cannot arise from any good Principle or Disposition in the Heart; and consequently, according to common Sense, have no sincere Goodness in 'em, having no Vertue of Heart in 'em. To have a vertuous Heart, is to have a Heart that favours Vertue, and is friendly to it, and not one perfectly cold and indifferent about it.

And besides the Actions that are done in a State of Indifference, or that arise immediately out of such a State, can't be vertuous, because, by the Supposition, they are not determined by any preceeding Choice. For if there be preceeding Choice, then Choice intervenes between the Act and the State of Indifference; which is contrary to the Supposition of the Act's arising immediately out of Indifference. But those Acts which are not determined by preceeding Choice, can't be vertuous or vicious by *Arminian* Principles, because they are not determined by the Will. So that neither one Way, nor the other, can any Actions be vertuous or vicious according to *Arminian* Principles. If the Action *be determined* by a preceeding Act of Choice it can't be vertuous; because the Action is not done in a State of In-

difference, nor does immediately arise from such a State; and so is not done in a State of Liberty. If the Action be *not determined* by a preceeding Act of Choice, then it can't be vertuous; because then the Will is not Self-determin'd in it. So that 'tis made certain, that neither Vertue nor Vice can ever find any Place in the Universe.

Moreover, that it is necessary to a vertuous Action that it be performed in a State of Indifference, under a Notion of that's being a State of Liberty, is contrary to common Sense; as 'tis a Dictate of common Sense, that Indifference it self, in many Cases, is vicious, and so to a high Degree. As if when I see my Neighbour or near Friend, and one who has in the highest Degree merited of me, in extreme Distress, and ready to perish, I find an Indifference in my Heart with Respect to anyThing proposed to be done, which I can easily do, for his Relief. So if it should be proposed to me, to blaspheme God, or kill my Father, or to do numberless other Things which might be mentioned; the being indifferent, for a Moment, would be highly vicious and vile.

And it may be further observed, that to suppose this Liberty of Indifference is essential to Vertue and Vice, destroys the great Difference of Degrees of the Guilt of different Crimes, and takes away the Heinousness of the most flagitious horrid Iniquities; such as Adultery Bestiality, Murder, Perjury, Blasphemy, &c. For according to these Principles, there is no Harm at all in having the Mind in a State of perfect Indifference withRespect to theseCrimes; nay, 'tis absolutely necessary in order to any Vertue in avoiding them, or Vice in doing them. But for the Mind to be in a State of Indifference with Respect to 'em, is to be next Door to doing them: It is then infinitely near to chusing, and so committing the Fact: For Equilibrium is the next Step to a Degree of Preponderation; and one, even the least Degree of Preponderation (all Things considered) is Choice. And not only so, but for the Will to be in a State of perfect Equilibrium with Respect to such Crimes, is for the Mind to be in such a State, as to be full as likely to chuse 'em as to refuse 'em, to do 'em as to omit 'em. And if our Minds must be in such a State wherein it is as near to chusing as refusing, and wherein it must of Necessity, according to the Nature of Things, be as likely to commit 'em, as to refrain from 'em; where is the exceeding Heinousness of chusing and committing them? If there be no Harm in often being in such a State, wherein the Probability

Probability of doing and forbearing are exactly equal, there being an Equilibrium, and no more Tendency to one than the other; then according to the Nature and Laws of such a Contingence, it may be expected, as an *inevitable* Consequence of such a Disposition of Things, that we should chuse 'em as often as reject 'em: That it should generally so fall out is necessary, as Equality in the Effect is the natural Consequence of the equal Tendency of the Cause, or of the antecedent State of Things from which the Effect arises: Why then should we be so exceedingly to blame, if it does so fall out?

'Tis many Ways apparent, that the *Arminian* Scheme of Liberty is utterly inconsistent with the being of any such Things as either vertuous or vicious Habits or Dispositions. If Liberty of *Indifference* be essential to moral Agency, then there can be no Vertue in any habitual Inclinations of the Heart; which are contrary to Indifference, and imply in their Nature the very Destruction and Exclusion of it. They suppose nothing can be vertuous, in which no Liberty is exercised; but how absurd is it to talk of exercising Indifference under Bias and Preponderation!

And if *self-determining Power* in the Will be necessary to moral Agency, Praise, Blame, &c. then nothing done by the Will can be any further Praise or Blame-worthy, than so far as the Will is moved, swayed and determined by it self, and the Scales turned by the sovereign Power the Will has over it self. And therefore the Will must not be put out of it's Balance already, the Preponderation must not be determined and effected beforehand; and so the self-determining Act anticipated. Thus it appears another Way, that habitual Bias is inconsistent with that Liberty which *Arminians* suppose to be necessary to Vertue or Vice; and so it follows, that habitual Bias it self cannot be either vertuous or vicious.

The same Thing follows from their Doctrine concerning the Inconsistence of *Necessity* with Liberty, Praise, Dispraise, &c. None will deny, that Bias and Inclination may be so strong as to be invincible, and leave no Possibility of the Will's determining contrary to it; and so be attended with Necessity. This Dr. *Whitby* allows concerning the Will of God, Angels and glorified Saints, with Respect to Good; and the Will of Devils with Respect to Evil. Therefore if Necessity be inconsistent with Liberty; then when fix'd Inclination is to such a Degree of Strength, it utterly excludes all Vertue, Vice, Praise

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or Blame. And if ſo, then the nearer Habits are to this Strength, the more do they impede Liberty, and ſo diminiſh Praiſe and Blame. If very ſtrong Habits deſtroy Liberty, the leſſer Ones proportionably hinder it, according to their Degree of Strength. And therefore it will follow, that then is the Act moſt vertuous or vicious, when performed without any Inclination or habitual Bias at all; becauſe it is then performed with moſt Liberty.

Every pre-poſſeſſing fix'd Bias on the Mind brings a Degree of moral Inability for the contrary; becauſe ſo far as the Mind is biaſſed and pre-poſſeſſed, ſo much *Hindrance* is there of the contrary. And therefore if moral Inability be inconſiſtent with moral Agency, or the Nature of Vertue and Vice, then ſo far as there is any ſuch Thing as evil Diſpoſition of Heart, or habitual Depravity of Inclination; whether Covetouſneſs, Pride, Malice, Cruelty, or whatever elſe; ſo much the more excuſable Perſons are; ſo much the leſs have their evil Acts of this Kind, the Nature of Vice. And on the contrary, whatever excellent Diſpoſitions and Inclinations they have, ſo much are they the leſs vertuous.

'Tis evident, that no habitual Diſpoſition of Heart, whether it be to a greater or leſſer Degree, can be in *any Degree* vertuous or vicious; or the Actions which proceed from them *at all* Praiſe or Blame-worthy. Becauſe, tho' we ſhould ſuppoſe the Habit not to be of ſuch Strength as wholly to take away all moral Ability and ſelf-determining Power; or hinder but that, altho' the Act be partly from Bias, yet it may be in Part from Self-determination; yet in this Caſe, all that is from antecedent Bias muſt be ſet aſide, as of no Conſideration; and in eſtimating the Degree of Vertue or Vice, no more muſt be conſidered than what ariſes from ſelf-determining Power, without any Influence of that Bias, becauſe Liberty is exerciſed in no more: So that all that is the Exerciſe of habitual Inclination, is thrown away, as not belonging to the Morality of the Action. By which it appears, that no Exerciſe of theſe Habits, let 'em be ſtronger or weaker, can ever have any Thing of the Nature of either Vertue or Vice.

Here if any one ſhould ſay, that notwithſtanding all theſe Things, there may be the Nature of Vertue and Vice in Habits of the Mind; becauſe theſe Habits may be the Effects of thoſe Acts wherein the Mind exerciſed Liberty; that however the forementioned Reaſons will prove that no Habits

which

which are natural, or that any are born or created with us, can be either vertuous or vicious ; yet they will not prove this of Habits, which have been acquired and eſtabliſh'd by repeated free Acts.

To ſuch an Objector I would ſay, that this Evaſion will not at all help the Matter. For if Freedom of Will be eſſential to the very *Nature* of Vertue and Vice, then there is no Vertue or Vice but only in that very Thing, wherein this Liberty is exerciſed. If a Man in one or more Thing that he does, exerciſes Liberty, and then by thoſe Acts is brought into ſuch Circumſtances, that his Liberty ceaſes, and there follows a long Series of Acts or Events that come to paſs neceſſarily ; thoſe conſequent Acts are not vertuous or vicious, rewardable or puniſhable ; but only the free Acts that eſtabliſh'd this Neceſſity ; for in them alone was the Man free. The following Effects that are neceſſary, have no more of the Nature of Vertue or Vice, than Health or Sickneſs of Body have properly the Nature of Vertue or Vice, being the Effects of a Courſe of free Acts of Temperance or Intemperance ; or than the good Qualities of a Clock are of the Nature of Vertue, which are the Effects of free Acts of the Artificer ; or the Goodneſs and Sweetneſs of the Fruits of a Garden are moral Vertues, being the Effects of the free and faithful Acts of the Gardener. If Liberty be abſolutely requiſite to the Morality of Actions, and Neceſſity wholly inconſiſtent with it, as *Arminians* greatly inſiſt ; then no *neceſſary Effects* whatſoever, let the Cauſe be never ſo good or bad, can be vertuous or vicious ; but the Vertue or Vice muſt be only in the *free Cauſe*. Agreably to this, Dr. *Whitby* ſuppoſes, the Neceſſity that attends the good and evil Habits of the Saints in Heaven, and Damned in Hell, which are the Conſequence of their free Acts in their State of Probation, are not rewardable or puniſhable.

On the whole, it appears, that if the Notions of *Arminians* concerning Liberty and moral Agency be true, it will follow that there is no Vertue in any ſuch Habits or Qualities as Humility, Meekneſs, Patience, Mercy, Gratitude, Generoſity, Heavenly-mindedneſs ; Nothing at all Praiſe-worthy in loving Chriſt above Father and Mother, Wife and Children, or our own Lives ; or in Delight in Holineſs, hungring and thirſting after Righteouſneſs, Love to Enemies, univerſal Benevolence to Mankind : And on the other Hand, there is nothing at all vicious, or worthy of Diſpraiſe, in the moſt ſordid, beaſtly, malignant, deviliſh Diſpoſitions ; in being ungrateful, profane, habitually

habitually hating God, and Things sacred and holy; or in being most treacherous, envious and cruel towards Men. For all these Things are *Dispositions* and *Inclinations* of the Heart. And in short, there is no such Thing as any vertuous or vicious *Quality of Mind*; no such Thing as inherent Vertue and Holiness, or Vice and Sin: And the stronger those Habits or Dispositions are, which used to be called vertuous and vicious, the further they are from being so indeed; the more violent Men's Lusts are, the more fix'd their Pride, Envy, Ingratitude and Maliciousness, still the further are they from being blameworthy. If there be a Man that by his own repeated Acts, or by any other Means, is come to be of the most hellish Disposition, desperately inclined to treat his Neighbours with Injuriousness, Contempt and Malignity; the further they should be from any Disposition to be angry with Him, or in the least to blame Him. So on the other Hand, if there be a Person, who is of a most excellent Spirit, strongly inclining him to the most amiable Actions, admirably meek, benevolent &c. so much is he further from anyThing rewardable or commendable. On which Principles, the Man Jesus Christ was very far from being Praise-worthy for those Acts of Holiness and Kindness which He performed, these Propensities being so strong in his Heart. And above all, the infinitely holy and gracious God, is infinitely remote from any Thing commendable, his good Inclinations being infinitely strong, and He therefore at the utmost possible Distance from being at Liberty. And in all Cases, the stronger the Inclinations of any are to Vertue, and the more they love it, the less vertuous they are; and the more they love Wickedness, the less vicious.---- Whether these Things are agreable to Scripture, let every Christian, and every Man who has read theBible, judge: and whether they are agreable to common Sense, let every one judge, that have human Understanding in Exercise.

And if we pursue these Principles, we shall find that Vertue and Vice are wholly excluded out of the World; and that there never was, nor ever can be any such Thing as one or the other; either in God, Angels or Men. No Propensity, Disposition or Habit can be vertuous or vicious, as has been shewn; because they, so far as they take Place, destroy the Freedom of the Will, the Foundation of all moral Agency, and exclude all Capacity of either Vertue or Vice.------ And if Habits and Dispositions themselves be not vertuous nor vicious, neither can the Exercise of these Dispositions be so: For the Exercise of *Bias* is not the Exercise of *free self-determining*

determining Will, and so there is no Exercise of Liberty in it. Consequently no Man is vertuous or vicious, either in being well or ill disposed, nor in acting from a good or bad Disposition. And whether this Bias or Disposition be habitual or not, if it exists but a Moment before the Act of Will, which is the Effect of it, it alters not the Case, as to the Necessity of the Effect. Or if there be no previous Disposition at all, either habitual or occasional, that determines the Act, then it is not Choice that determines it : it is therefore a Contingence, that happens to the Man, arising from Nothing in him ; and is necessary, as to any Inclination or Choice of his ; and therefore can't make Him either the better or worse, any more than a Tree is better than other Trees, because it oftener happens to be lit upon by a Swan or Nightingal ; or a Rock more vicious than other Rocks, because Rattle-Snakes have happen'd oftner to crawl over it. So that there is no Vertue nor Vice in good or bad Dispositions, either fix'd or transient ; nor any Vertue or Vice in acting from any good or bad previous Inclination ; nor yet any Vertue or Vice in acting wholly without any previous Inclination. Where then shall we find Room for Vertue or Vice ?

Section VII.

Arminian *Notions of moral Agency inconsistent with all Influence of* Motive *and* Inducement, *in either vertuous or vicious Actions.*

As *Arminian* Notions of that Liberty, which is essential to Vertue or Vice, are inconsistent with common Sense, in their being inconsistent with all vertuous or vicious Habits and Dispositions ; so they are no less so in their Inconsistency with all Influence of Motives in moral Actions.

'Tis equally against those Notions of Liberty of Will, whether there be, previous to the Act of Choice, a Preponderancy of the Inclination, or a Preponderancy of those Circumstances, which have a Tendency to move the Inclination. And indeed it comes to just the same Thing: To say, the Circumstances of the Mind are such as tend to sway and turn it's Inclination one Way, is the same Thing as to say, the Inclination of the Mind, as under such Circumstances, tends that Way.

Or if any think it most proper to say, that Motives do alter the Inclination, and give a new Bias to the Mind; it will not alter the Case, as to the present Argument. For if Motives operate by giving the Mind an Inclination, then they operate by destroying the Mind's Indifference, and laying it under a Bias. But to do this, is to destroy the *Arminian* Freedom: It is not to leave the Will to it's own Self-determination, but to bring it into Subjection to the Power of something extrinsick, which operates upon it, sways and determines it, previous to it's own Determination. So that what is done from Motive, can't be either vertuous or vicious.----And besides, if the Acts of the Will are excited by Motives, those Motives are the *Causes* of those Acts of the Will: which makes the Acts of the Will necessary; as Effects necessarily follow the Efficiency of the Cause. And if the Influence and Power of the Motive causes the Volition, then the Influence of the Motive determines Volition, and Volition don't determine it self; and so is not free, in the Sense of *Arminians* (as has been largely shewn already) and consequently can be neither vertuous nor vicious.

The Supposition, which has already been taken Notice of as an insufficient Evasion in other Cases, would be in like Manner impertinently alledged in this Case; namely, the Supposition that Liberty consists in a Power of suspending Action for the present, in order to Deliberation. If it should be said, Tho' it be true, that the Will is under a Necessity of finally following the strongest Motive, yet it may for the present forbear to act upon the Motive presented, till there has been Opportunity thoroughly to consider it, and compare it's real Weight with the Merit of other Motives. I answer, as follows.

Here again it must be remember'd, that if determining thus to suspend and consider, be that Act of the Will wherein alone Liberty is exercised, then in this all Vertue and Vice must consist;

conſiſt; and the Acts that follow this Conſideration, and are the Effects of it, being neceſſary, are no more vertuous or vicious than ſome good or bad Events which happen when they are faſt aſleep, and are the Conſequences of what they did when they were awake. Therefore I would here obſerve two Things.

1. To ſuppoſe that all Vertue and Vice, in every Caſe, conſiſts in determining whether to take Time for Conſideration, or not, is not agreable to common Senſe. For according to ſuch a Suppoſition, the moſt horrid Crimes, Adultery, Murder, Buggery, Blaſphemy, &c. do not at all conſiſt in the horrid Nature of the Things themſelves, but only in the Neglect of thorough Conſideration before they were perpetrated: which brings their Vicioufneſs to a ſmall Matter, and makes all Crimes equal. If it be ſaid, that Neglect of Conſideration, when ſuch heinous Evils are propoſed to Choice, is worſe than in other Caſes: I anſwer, this is inconſiſtent, as it ſuppoſes the very Thing to be, which at the ſame Time is ſuppoſed not to be; it ſuppoſes all moral Evil, all Vicioufneſs and Heinouſneſs, does not conſiſt meerly in the want of Conſideration. It ſuppoſes ſome Crimes *in themſelves*, in their *own Nature*, to be more heinous than others, antecedent to Conſideration or Inconſideration, which lays the Perſon under a previous Obligation to conſider in ſome Caſes more than others.

2. If it were ſo, that all Vertue and Vice, in every Caſe, conſiſted only in the Act of the Will, whereby it determines whether to conſider or no, it would not alter the Caſe in the leaſt, as to the preſent Argument. For ſtill in this Act of the Will on this Determination, it is induced by ſome Motive, and neceſſarily follows the ſtrongeſt Motive; and ſo is neceſſary, even in that Act wherein alone it is either vertuous or vicious.

One Thing more I would obſerve, concerning the Inconſiſtence of *Arminian* Notions of moral Agency with the Influence of Motives.---- I ſuppoſe none will deny, that 'tis poſſible for Motives to be ſet before the Mind ſo powerful, and exhibited in ſo ſtrong a Light, and under ſo advantageous Circumſtances, as to be invincible; and ſuch as the Mind cannot but yield to. In this Caſe, *Arminians* will doubtleſs ſay, Liberty is deſtroyed. And if ſo, then if Motives are exhibited with half ſo much Power, they hinder Liberty in Proportion to their Strength, and go half-way towards deſtroying it. If a Thouſand Degrees of Motive aboliſh all Liberty, then five

Hundred take it half away. If one Degree of the Influence of Motive don't at all infringe or diminish Liberty, then no more do two Degrees; for Nothing doubled, is still Nothing. And if two Degrees don't diminish the Will's Liberty, no more do four, eight, sixteen, or six Thousand. For Nothing multiplied never so much, comes to but Nothing. If there be nothing in the Nature of Motive or moral Suasion, that is at all opposite to Liberty, then the greatest Degree of it can't hurt Liberty. But if there be any Thing in the Nature of the Thing, that is against Liberty, then the least Degree of it hurts it in some Degree; and consequently hurts and diminishes Vertue. If invincible Motives to that Act which is good, take away all the Freedom of the Act, and so all the Vertue of it; then the more forceable the Motives are, so much the worse, so much the less Vertue; and the weaker the Motives are, the better for the Cause of Vertue; and none is best of all.

Now let it be considered, whether these Things are agreable to common Sense. If it should be allowed, that there are some Instances wherein the Soul chuses without any Motive, what Vertue can there be in such a Choice? I am sure, there is no Prudence or Wisdom in it. Such a Choice is made for no good End; for it is for no End at all. If it were for any End, the View of the End would be the Motive exciting to the Act; and if the Act be for no good End, and so from no good Aim, then there is no good Intention in it: And therefore, according to all our natural Notions of Vertue, no more Vertue in it than in the Motion of the Smoke, which is driven to and fro by the Wind, without any Aim or End in the Thing moved, and which knows not whither, nor why and wherefore, it is moved.

Corol. 1. By these Things it appears, that the Argument against the *Calvinists*, taken from the Use of Counsels, Exhortations, Invitations, Expostulations, &c. so much insisted on by *Arminians*, is truly against themselves. For these Things can operate no other Way to any good Effect, than as in them is exhibited Motive and Inducement, tending to excite and determine the Acts of the Will. But it follows on their Principles, that the Acts of Will excited by such Causes, can't be vertuous; because so far as they are from these, they are not from the Will's self-determining Power. Hence it will follow, that it is not worth the while to offer any Arguments to perswade Men to any vertuous Volition or voluntary Action;

Action ; 'tis in vain to ſet before them the Wiſdom and Amiableneſs of Ways of Vertue, or the Odiouſneſs and Folly of Ways of Vice. This Notion of Liberty and moral Agency fruſtrates all Endeavours to draw Men to Vertue by Inſtruction, or Perſwaſion, Precept, or Example : For tho' theſe Things may induce Men to what is *materially* vertuous, yet at the ſame Time they take away the *Form* of Vertue, becauſe they deſtroy Liberty ; as they, by their own Power, put the Will out of it's Equilibrium, determine and turn the Scale, and take the Work of ſelf-determining Power out of it's Hands. And the clearer the Inſtructions are that are given, the more powerful the Arguments that are uſed, and the more moving the Perſwaſions or Examples, the more likely they are to fruſtrate their own Deſign ; Becauſe they have ſo much the greater Tendency to put the Will out of it's Balance, to hinder it's Freedom of ſelf-determination ; and ſo to exclude the very Form of Vertue, and the Eſſence of whatſoever is Praiſe-worthy.

So it clearly follows from theſe Principles, that God has no Hand in any Man's Vertue, nor does at all promote it, either by a phyſical or moral Influence ; that none of the moral Methods He uſes with Men to promote Vertue in the World, have Tendency to the Attainment of that End ; that all the Inſtructions which He has given to Men, from the Beginning of the World to this Day, by Prophets, or Apoſtles, or by his Son Jeſus Chriſt ; that all his Counſels, Invitations, Promiſes, Threatnings, Warnings and Expoſtulations ; that all Means He has uſed with Men, in Ordinances, or Providences ; yea, all Influences of his Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, have had no Tendency at all to excite any one vertuous Act of the Mind, or to promote any Thing morally good and commendable, in any Reſpect.---- For there is no Way that theſe or any other Means can promote Vertue, but one of theſe three. Either (1.) By a phyſical Operation on the Heart. But all Effects that are wrought in Men in this Way, have no Vertue in them, by the concurring Voice of all *Arminians*. Or (2.) Morally, by exhibiting Motives to the Underſtanding, to excite good Acts in the Will. But it has been demonſtrated, that Volitions which are excited by Motives, are neceſſary, and not excited by a ſelf-moving Power ; and therefore, by their Principles, there is no Vertue in them. Or (3.) By meerly giving the Will an Opportunity to determine it ſelf concerning the Objects propoſed, either to chuſe or reject, by it's own uncauſed, unmoved, uninfluenced ſelf-determination. And if this

this be all, then all those Means do no more to promote Vertue, than Vice: For they do Nothing but give the Will Opportunity to determine it self *either Way*, either to Good or Bad, without laying it under any Bias to either: And so there is really as much of an Opportunity given to determine in Favour of Evil, as of Good.

Thus that horrid blasphemous Consequence will certainly follow from the *Arminian* Doctrine, which they charge on others; namely, that God acts an inconsistent Part in using so many Counsels, Warnings, Invitations, Intreaties, &c. with Sinners, to induce 'em to forsake Sin, and turn to the Ways of Vertue; and that all are insincere and fallacious. It will follow from their Doctrine, that God does these Things when He knows at the same Time, that they have no Manner of Tendency to promote the Effect He seems to aim at; yea, knows that if they have any Influence, this very Influence will be inconsistent with such an Effect, and will prevent it. But what an Imputation of Insincerity would this fix on Him who is infinitely holy and true!--So that their's is the Doctrine which if pursued in it's Consequences, does horribly reflect on the most High, and fix on Him the Charge of Hypocrisy; and not the Doctrine of the *Calvinist*; according to their frequent, and vehement Exclamations and Invectives.

Corol. 2. From what has been observed in this Section, it again appears, that *Arminian* Principles and Notions, when fairly examined, and pursued in their demonstrable Consequences, do evidently shut all Vertue out of the World, and make it impossible that there should ever be any such Thing, in any Case; or that any such Thing should ever be conceiv'd of. For by these Principles, the very Notion of Vertue or Vice implies Absurdity and Contradiction. For it is absurd in it self, and contrary to common Sense, to suppose a vertuous Act of Mind without any good Intention or Aim; and by their Principles, it is absurd to suppose a vertuous Act with a good Intention or Aim; for to act for an End, is to act from a Motive. So that if we rely on these Principles, there can be no vertuous Act with a good Design and End; and 'tis self-evident, there can be none without: consequently there can be no vertuous Act at all.

Corol. 3. 'Tis manifest, that *Arminian* Notions of moral Agency, and *the Being* of a Faculty of Will, cannot consist together; and that if there be any such Thing as, either a vertuous,

tuous, or vicious Act, it can't be an Act of Will; no Will can be at all concerned in it. For that Act which is performed without Inclination, without Motive, without End, must be performed without any Concern of the Will. To suppose an Act of the Will without these, implies a Contradiction. If the Soul in it's Act has no Motive or End; then in that Act (as was observed before) it seeks Nothing, goes after Nothing, exerts no Inclination to any Thing; and this implies, that in that Act it desires Nothing, and chuses Nothing; so that there is no Act of Choice in the Case: And that is as much as to say, there is no Act of Will in the Case. Which very effectually shuts out all vicious and vertuous Acts out of the Universe; in as much as, according to this, there can be no vicious or vertuous Act wherein the Will is concerned; and according to the plainest Dictates of Reason, and the Light of Nature, and also the Principles of *Arminians* themselves, there can be no vertuous or vicious Act wherein the Will is not concerned. And therefore there is no Room for any vertuous or vicious Acts at all.

Corol. 4. If none of the moral Actions of intelligent Beings are influenced by either previous Inclination or Motive, another strange Thing will follow; and this is, that God not only can't foreknow any of the future moral Actions of his Creatures, but He can make no Conjecture, can give no probable Guess concerning them. For, all Conjecture in Things of this Nature, must depend on some Discerning or Apprehension of these two Things, *previous Disposition*, and *Motive*; which, as has been observed, *Arminian* Notions of moral Agency, in their real Consequence, altogether exclude.

PART

PART IV.

Wherein the chief Grounds of the Reaſonings of *Arminians*, in Support and Defence of the forementiond Notions of *Liberty*, *moral Agency*, &c. and againſt the oppoſite Doctrine, are conſidered.

SECTION I.

The Eſſence *of the Vertue and Vice of Diſpoſitions of the Heart, and Acts of the Will, lies not in their* Cauſe, *but their* Nature.

ONE main Foundation of the Reaſons, which are brought to eſtabliſh the forementiond Notions of Liberty, Vertue, Vice, &c. is a Suppoſition, that the Vertuouſneſs of the Diſpoſitions or Acts of the Will conſiſts not in the Nature of theſe Diſpoſitions or Acts, but wholly in the Origin or Cauſe of them: ſo that if the Diſpoſition of the Mind or Act of the Will be never ſo good, yet if the Cauſe of the Diſpoſition or Act be not our Vertue, there is nothing vertuous or praiſe-worthy in it; and on the contrary, if the Will in it's Inclination or Acts be never

ver so bad, yet unless it arises from something that is our Vice or Fault, there is Nothing vicious or blame-worthy in it. Hence their grand Objection and pretended Demonstration, or Self-Evidence, against any Vertue and Commendableness, or Vice and Blame-worthiness, of those Habits or Acts of the Will, which are not from some vertuous or vicious Determination of the Will it self.

Now, if this Matter be well considered, it will appear to be altogether a Mistake, yea, a gross Absurdity; and that it is most certain, that if there be any such Things, as a vertuous, or vicious Disposition, or Volition of Mind, the Vertuousness or Viciousness of them consists not in the Origin or Cause of these Things, but in the Nature of them.

If the Essence of Vertuousness or Commendableness, and of Viciousness or Fault, don't lie in the Nature of the Dispositions or Acts of Mind, which are said to be our Vertue or our Fault, but in their Cause, then it is certain it lies no where at all. Thus, for Instance, if the Vice of a *vicious* Act of Will, lies not in the Nature of the Act, but the Cause; so that it's being of a bad Nature will not make it at all our Fault, unless it arises from some faulty Determination of our's as it's Cause, or something in us that is our Fault; then for the same Reason, neither can the Viciousness of that Cause lie in the Nature of the Thing it self, but in *it's* Cause: that evil Determination of our's is not our Fault, meerly because it is of a bad Nature, unless it arises from some Cause in us that is our Fault. And when we are come to this higher Cause, still the Reason of the Thing holds good; tho' this Cause be of a bad Nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that Account, unless it arises from something faulty in us. Nor yet can Blame-worthiness lie in the Nature of *this Cause*, but in the Cause of *that*. And thus we must drive Faultiness back from Step to Step, from a lower Cause to a higher, *in infinitum*: and that is thoroughly to banish it from the World, and to allow it no possibility of Existence any where in the Universality of Things. On these Principles, Vice or moral Evil can't consist in any Thing that is an *Effect*; because *Fault* don't consist in the Nature of Things, but in their Cause; as well as because Effects are necessary, being unavoidably connected with their Cause: therefore the Cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that Faultiness can lie *only in that Cause*, which is a *Cause only*, and no Effect of any Thing. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the Nature of the Thing it self; not in it's be-

ing from any Determination of our's, nor any Thing faulty in us which is the Cauſe, nor indeed from any Cauſe at all, for by the Suppoſition, it is no Effect, and *has no Cauſe*. And thus, He that will maintain, it is not the Nature of Habits or Acts of Will that makes them vertuous or faulty, but the Cauſe, muſt immediately run Himſelf out of his own Aſſertion; and in maintaining it, will inſenſibly contradict and deny it.

This is certain, that if Effects are vicious and faulty, not from their Nature, or from any Thing inherent in them, but becauſe they are from a bad Cauſe, it muſt be on Account of the *Badneſs* of the Cauſe; and ſo on Account of the *Nature* of the Cauſe: A bad Effect in the Will muſt be bad, becauſe the Cauſe is *bad*, or *of an evil Nature*, or *has Badneſs* as a Quality inherent in it: and a *good* Effect in the Will muſt be *good*, by Reaſon of the *Goodneſs* of the Cauſe, or it's being *of a good Kind and Nature*. And if this be what is meant, the very Suppoſition of Fault and Praiſe lying not in the Nature of the Thing, but the Cauſe, contradicts it ſelf, and does at leaſt reſolve the Eſſence of Vertue and Vice into theNature of Things, and ſuppoſes it originally to conſiſt in that.---- And if a Caviller has a Mind to run from the Abſurdity, by ſaying, "No, the Fault of the "Thing which is the Cauſe, lies not in this, that the Cauſe "it ſelf is *of an evil Nature*, but that the Cauſe is evil in "that Senſe, that it is from another bad Cauſe". Still the Abſurdity will follow him; for if ſo, then the Cauſe before charged is at once acquitted, and all the Blame muſt be laid to the higher Cauſe, and muſt conſiſt in that's being *Evil*, or *of an evil Nature*. So now we are come again to lay theBlame of the Thing blame-worthy, to the Nature of the Thing, and not to the Cauſe. And if any is ſo fooliſh as to go higher ſtill, and aſcend from Step to Step, till he is come to that which is the firſtCauſe concerned in the whole Affair, and will ſay, all the Blame lies in that; then at laſt he muſt be forced to own, that the Faultineſs of the Thing which he ſuppoſes alone blame-worthy, lies wholly *in the Nature* of the Thing, and not in the Original or Cauſe of it; for the Suppoſition is, that it has no Original, it is determined by noAct of our's, is cauſed by nothing faulty in us, being abſolutely *without any Cauſe*. And ſo the Race is at an End, but the Evader is taken in his Flight.

'Tis agreable to the natural Notions of Mankind, that moral Evil, with it's Deſert of Diſlike and Abhorrence, and all it's other Ill-deſervings, conſiſts in a certain *Deformity* in

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the *Nature* of certain Diſpoſitions of the Heart, and Acts of the Will; and not in the Deformity of *ſomething elſe*, diverſe from the very Thing it ſelf, which deſerves Abhorrence, ſuppoſed to be the Cauſe of it. Which would be abſurd, becauſe that would be to ſuppoſe, a Thing that is innocent and not Evil, is truly evil and faulty, becauſe another Thing is Evil. It implies a Contradiction; for it would be to ſuppoſe, the very Thing which is morally evil and blameworthy, is innocent and not blame-worthy; but that ſomething elſe, which is it's Cauſe, is only to blame. To ſay, that Vice don't conſiſt in the Thing which is vicious, but in it's Cauſe, is the ſame as to ſay, that Vice don't conſiſt in Vice, but in that which produces it.

'Tis true, a Cauſe may be to blame, for being the Cauſe of Vice: It may be Wickedneſs in the Cauſe, that it produces Wickedneſs. But it would imply a Contradiction, to ſuppoſe that theſe two are the ſame individual Wickedneſs. The wicked Act of the Cauſe in producing Wickedneſs, is one Wickedneſs; and the Wickedneſs produced, if there be any produced, is another. And therefore the Wickedneſs of the latter don't lie in the former, but is diſtinct from it; and the Wickedneſs of both lies in the *evil Nature* of the Things which are wicked.

The Thing which makes Sin hateful, is that by which it deſerves Puniſhment; which is but the Expreſſion of Hatred. And that which renders Vertue lovely, is the ſame with that, on the Account of which, it is fit to receive Praiſe and Reward; which are but the Expreſſions of Eſteem and Love. But that which makes Vice hateful, is it's hateful Nature; and that which renders Vertue lovely, is it's amiable Nature. 'Tis a certain Beauty or Deformity that are *inherent* in that good or evil Will, which is the *Soul* of Vertue and Vice (and not in the *Occaſion* of it) which is their Worthineſs of Eſteem or Diſeſteem, Praiſe or Diſpraiſe, according to the common Senſe of Mankind. If the Cauſe or Occaſion of the Riſe of an hateful Diſpoſition or Act of Will, be alſo hateful; ſuppoſe another antecedent evil Will; that is entirely another Sin, and deſerves Puniſhment by it ſelf, under a diſtinct Conſideration. There is Worthineſs of Diſpraiſe in the Nature of an evil Volition, and not wholly in ſome foregoing Act which is it's Cauſe; otherwiſe the evil Volition which is the Effect, is no moral Evil, any more than Sickneſs, or ſome other natural Calamity, which ariſes from a Cauſe morally evil.

Thus for Instance, Ingratitude is hateful and worthy of Dispraise, according to common Sense; not because something as bad, or worse than Ingratitude, was the Cause that produced it; but because it is hateful in it self, by it's own inherent Deformity. So the Love of Vertue is amiable, and worthy of Praise, not meerly because something else went before this Love of Vertue in our Minds, which caused it to take Place there; for Instance our own Choice; we chose to love Vertue, and by some Method or other wrought our selves into the Love of it; but because of the Amiableness and Condecency of such a Disposition and Inclination of Heart. If that *was* the Case, that we *did* chuse to love Vertue, and so produced that Love in our selves, this Choice it self could be no otherwise amiable or praise-worthy, than as Love to Vertue, or some other amiable Inclination, was exercised and implied in it. If that Choice was amiable at all, it must be so on Account of some amiable Quality in the Nature of the Choice. If we chose to love Vertue, not in Love to Vertue, or any Thing that was good, and exercised no sort of good Disposition in the Choice, the Choice it self was not vertuous, nor worthy of any Praise, according to common Sense, because the Choice was not of a *good Nature*.

It may not be improper here to take Notice of something said by an Author, that has lately made a mighty Noise in *America*. "A necessary Holiness (says He *) is no Holiness.---- "*Adam* could not be originally created in Righteousness and "true Holiness, because He must *chuse* to be righteous, *before* "He could be righteous, And therefore He must exist, He "must be created, yea He must exercise Thought and Re- "flection, before he was righteous." There is much more to the same Effect in that Place, and also in P. 437, 438, 439, 440. If these Things are so, it will certainly follow, that the first chusing to be righteous is no righteous Choice; there is no Righteousness or Holiness in it; because no chusing to be righteous goes before it. For He plainly speaks of *chusing to be righteous*, as what *must go before Righteousness*: And that which follows the Choice, being the Effect of the Choice, can't be Righteousness or Holiness: For an Effect is a Thing necessary, and can't prevent the Influence or Efficacy of it's Cause; and therefore is unavoidably dependent upon the Cause: And He says, *A necessary Holiness is no Holiness*. So that neither can a Choice of Righteousness be Righteousness or Holiness,

* Scrip. Doc. of *Original Sin*, P. 180. 3d Edit.

Holineſs, nor can any Thing that is conſequent on that Choice, and the Effect of it, be Righteouſneſs or Holineſs; nor can any Thing that is without Choice, be Righteouſneſs or Holineſs. So that by his Scheme, all Righteouſneſs and Holineſs is at once ſhut out of the World, and no Door left open, by which it can ever poſſibly enter into the World.

I ſuppoſe, the Way that Men came to entertain this abſurd inconſiſtent Notion, with Reſpect to *internal Inclinations and Volitions* themſelves, (or Notions that imply it,) *viz.* that the Eſſence of their moral Good or Evil lies not in their Nature, but their Cauſe; was, that it is indeed a very plain Dictate of common Senſe, that it is ſo with Reſpect to all *outward Actions*, and ſenſible Motions of the Body; that the moral Good or Evil of 'em don't lie at all in the Motions themſelves; which taken by themſelves, are nothing of a moral Nature; and the Eſſence of all the moral Good or Evil that concerns them, lies in thoſe internal Diſpoſitions and Volitions which are the Cauſe of them. Now being always uſed to determine this, without Heſitation or Diſpute, concerning *external Actions*; which are the Things that in the common Uſe of Language are ſignified by ſuch Phraſes, as Men's *Actions*, or their *Doings*; Hence when they came to ſpeak of Volitions, and *internal Exerciſes* of their Inclinations, under the ſame Denomination of their *Actions*, or *what they do*, they unwarily determined the Caſe muſt alſo be the ſame with theſe, as with *external Actions*; not conſidering the vaſt Difference in the Nature of the Caſe.

If any ſhall ſtill object and ſay, Why is it not neceſſary that the Cauſe ſhould be conſidered, in order to determine whether any Thing be worthy of Blame or Praiſe? Is it agreable to Reaſon and common Senſe, that a Man is to be praiſed or blamed for that which he is not the Cauſe or Author of, and has no Hand in?

I anſwer, ſuch Phraſes as *being the Cauſe*, *being the Author*, *having a Hand*, and the like are ambiguous. They are moſt vulgarly underſtood for being the deſigning voluntary Cauſe, or Cauſe by antecedent Choice: And it is moſt certain that Men are not in this Senſe the Cauſes or Authors of the firſt Act of their Wills, in any Caſe; as certain as any Thing is, or ever can be; for nothing can be more certain, than that a Thing is not before it is, nor a Thing of the ſame Kind before the firſt Thing of that Kind; and ſo no Choice before the

the first Choice.----As the Phrase, *being the Author*, may be understood, not of being the Producer by an antecedent Act of Will; but as a Person may be said to be the Author of the Act of Will it self, by his being the immediate Agent, or the Being that *is acting*, or *in Exercise* in that Act; If the Phrase of *being the Author*, is used to signify this, then doubtless common Sense requires Men's being the Authors of their own Acts of Will, in order to their being esteemed worthy of Praise or Dispraise on Account of them. And common Sense teaches, that they must be the Authors of *external Actions*, in the former Sense, namely, their being the Causes of 'em by an Act of Will or Choice, in order to their being justly blamed or praised: But it teaches no such Thing with Respect to the Acts of the Will themselves.---But this may appear more manifest by the Things which will be observed in the following Section.

Section II.

The Falseness and Inconsistence of that metaphysical Notion of Action, *and* Agency, *which seems to be generally entertained by the Defenders of the* Arminian *Doctrine concerning Liberty, moral Agency*, &c.

ONE Thing that is made very much a Ground of Argument and supposed Demonstration by *Arminians*, in Defence of the fore-mentioned Principles, concerning moral Agency, Vertue, Vice &c. is their metaphysical Notion of *Agency* and *Action*. They say, unless the Soul has a Self-determining Power, it has no Power of *Action*; If it's Volitions be not caused by it self, but are excited and determined by some extrinsic Cause, they can't be the Soul's own *Acts*; and that the Soul can't be *active*, but must be wholly *passive*, in those Effects which it is the Subject of necessarily, and not from it's own free Determination.

Mr.

Mr. *Chubb* lays the Foundation of his Scheme of Liberty, and of his Arguments to support it, very much in this Position, That *Man is an Agent, and capable of Action.* Which doubtless is true: But *Self-determination* belongs to his Notion of *Action*, and is the very Essence of it. Whence he infers that it is impossible for a Man to act and be acted upon, in the same Thing, at the same Time; and that nothing that is an Action, can be the Effect of the Action of another: and he insists, that a *necessary Agent*, or an Agent that is necessarily determined to act, is a *plain Contradiction.*

But those are a precarious Sort of Demonstrations, which Men build on the Meaning that they arbitrarily affix to a Word; especially when that Meaning is abstruse, inconsistent, and entirely diverse from the original Sense of the Word in common Speech.

That the Meaning of the Word *Action*, as Mr. *Chubb* and many others use it, is utterly unintelligible and inconsistent, is manifest, because it belongs to their Notion of an Action, that 'tis something wherein is no Passion or Passiveness; that is (according to their Sense of Passiveness) it is under the Power, Influence or Action of no Cause. And this implies, that Action has no Cause, and is no Effect: for to be an Effect implies *Passiveness*, or the being subject to the Power and Action of it's Cause. And yet they hold, that the Mind's *Action* is the Effect of it's own Determination, yea, the Mind's free and voluntary Determination; which is the same with free Choice. So that Action is the Effect of something preceeding, even a preceeding Act of Choice: And consequently, in this Effect the Mind is passive, subject to the Power and Action of the preceeding Cause, which is the foregoing Choice, and therefore can't be active. So that here we have this Contradiction, that Action is always the Effect of foregoing Choice; and therefore can't be Action; because it is *passive* to the Power of that preceeding causal Choice; and the Mind can't be active and passive in the same Thing, at the same Time. Again, they say, Necessity is utterly inconsistent with Action, and a necessary Action is a Contradiction; and so their Notion of Action implies Contingence, and excludes all Necessity. And therefore their Notion of Action implies, that it has no necessary Dependence or Connection with any Thing foregoing; for such a Dependence or Connection excludes Contingence, and implies Necessity. And yet their Notion of Action implies Necessity, and supposes that it is necessary, and can't be contingent,

contingent. For they suppose, that whatever is properly called Action, must be determined by the Will and free Choice; and this is as much as to say, that it must be necessary, being dependent upon, and determined by something foregoing; namely, a foregoing Act of Choice. Again, it belongs to their Notion of Action, of that which is a proper and meer Act, that it is the Beginning of Motion, or of Exertion of Power; but yet it is implied in their Notion of Action, that it is not the Beginning of Motion or Exertion of Power, but is consequent and dependent on a preceeding Exertion of Power, *viz.* the Power of Will and Choice: for they say there is no proper Action but what is freely *chosen*; or, which is the same Thing, determined by a foregoing Act of free Choice. But if any of them shall see Cause to deny this, and say they hold no such Thing as that every Action is chosen, or determined by a foregoing Choice; but that the very first Exertion of Will only, undetermined by any preceeding Act, is properly called Action; then I say, such a Man's Notion of Action implies Necessity; for what the Mind is the Subject of without the Determination of it's own previous Choice, it is the Subject of necessarily, as to any Hand that free Choice has in the Affair; and without any Ability the Mind has to prevent it, by any Will or Election of it's own: because by the Supposition it precludes all previous Acts of the Will or Choice in the Case, which might prevent it. So that it is again, in this other Way, implied in their Notion of Act, that it is both necessary and not necessary. Again, it belongs to their Notion of an *Act*, that it is no Effect of a pre-determining Bias or Preponderation, but springs immediately out of Indifference; and this implies that it can't be from foregoing Choice, which is foregoing Preponderation: if it be not habitual, but occasional, yet if it causes the Act, it is truly previous, efficacious and determining. And yet, at the same Time, 'tis essential to their Notion of an Act, that it is what the Agent is the Author of freely and voluntarily, and that is, by previous Choice and Design.

So that according to their Notion of an Act, considered with Regard to it's Consequences, these following Things are all essential to it; *viz.* That it should be necessary, and not necessary; that it should be from a Cause, and no Cause; that it should be the Fruit of Choice and Design, and not the Fruit of Choice and Design; that it should be the Beginning of Motion or Exertion, and yet consequent on previous Exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of Indifference and Equilibrium, and yet be the Effect of Preponderation;

Preponderation; that it should be self-originated, and also have it's Original from something else; that it is what the Mind causes it self, of it's own Will, and can produce or prevent, according to it's Choice or Pleasure, and yet what the Mind has no Power to prevent, it precluding all previous Choice in the Affair.

So that an Act, according to their metaphysical Notion of it, is something of which there is no Idea; 'tis nothing but a Confusion of the Mind, excited by Words without any distinct Meaning, and is an absolute Non-entity; and that in two Respects; (1.) There is nothing in the World that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the Things which must belong to it's Description, according to what they suppose to be essential to it. And (2.) There neither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any Notion or Idea to answer the Word, as they use and explain it. For if we should suppose any such Notion, it would many Ways destroy it self. But 'tis impossible, any Idea or Notion should subsist in the Mind, whose very Nature and Essence, which constitutes it, destroys it.--- If some learned Philosopher, who had been abroad, in giving an Account of the curious Observations he had made in his Travels, should say, "He had been in *Terra del Fuego*, and there had seen an "Animal, which he calls by a certain Name, that begat and "brought forth it self, and yet had a Sire and a Dam distinct "from it self; that it had an Appetite, and was hungry before "it had a Being; that his Master, who led him, and govern-"ed him at his Pleasure, was always governed by him, and "driven by him where he pleased; that when he moved, he "always took a Step before the first Step; that he went with "his Head first, and yet always went Tail foremost; and this, tho' "he had neither Head nor Tail:" It would be no Impudence at all, to tell such a Traveller, tho' a learned Man, that He himself had no Notion or Idea of such an Animal as he gave an Account of, and never had, nor ever would have.

As the forementioned Notion of Action is very inconsistent, so it is wholly diverse from the original Meaning of the Word. The more usual Signification of it in vulgar Speech, seems to be some *Motion* or *Exertion of Power*, that is voluntary, or that is *the Effect of the Will*; and is used in the same Sense as *doing*: And most commonly 'tis used to signify *outward Actions*. So *Thinking* is often distinguish'd from *Acting*; and *Desiring* and *Willing*, from *Doing*.

Beſides this more uſual and proper Signification of the Word *Action*, there are other Ways in which the Word is uſed that are leſs proper, which yet have Place in common Speech. Oftentimes 'tis uſed to ſignify ſome Motion or Alteration in inanimate Things, with Relation to ſome Object and Effect. So the Spring of a Watch is ſaid to *act* upon the Chain and Wheels; the Sun-beams, to act upon Plants and Trees; and the Fire, to act upon Wood. Sometimes the Word is uſed to ſignify Motions, Alterations, and Exertions of Power, which are ſeen in corporeal Things, *conſidered abſolutely*; eſpecially when theſe Motions ſeem to ariſe from ſome internal Cauſe which is *hidden*; ſo that they have a greater Reſemblance of thoſe Motions of our Bodies, which are the Effects of internal Volition, or inviſible Exertions of Will. So the Fermentation of Liquor, the Operations of the Loadſtone, and of electrical Bodies, are called the *Action* of theſe Things. And ſometimes the Word *Action* is uſed to ſignify the Exerciſe of Thought, or of Will and Inclination: ſo meditating, loving, hating, inclining, diſinclining, chuſing and refuſing, may be ſometimes called acting; tho' more rarely (unleſs it be by Philoſophers and Metaphyſicians) than in any of the other Senſes.

But the Word is never uſed in vulgar Speech in that Senſe which *Arminian* Divines uſe it in, namely, for the ſelf-determinate Exerciſe of the Will, or an Exertion of the Soul that ariſes without any neceſſary Connection with any Thing foregoing. If a Man does ſomething voluntarily, or as the Effect of his Choice, then in the moſt proper Senſe, and as the Word is moſt originally and commonly uſed, he is ſaid to *act*: But whether that Choice or Volition be ſelf-determined, or no, whether it be connected with foregoing habitual Bias, whether it be the certain Effect of the ſtrongeſt Motive, or ſome extrinſick Cauſe, never comes into Conſideration in the Meaning of the Word.

And if the Word *Action* is arbitrarily uſed by ſome Men otherwiſe, to ſuit ſome Scheme of Metaphyſicks or Morality, no Argument can reaſonably be founded on ſuch a Uſe of this Term, to prove any Thing but their own Pleaſure. For Divines and Philoſophers ſtrenuouſly to urge ſuch Arguments, as tho' they were ſufficient to ſupport and demonſtrate a whole Scheme of moral Philoſophy and Divinity, is certainly to erect a mighty Edifice on the Sand, or rather on a Shadow. And tho' it may now perhaps, thro' Cuſtom, have become natural for 'em to uſe the Word in this Senſe (if that may be called a Senſe

Sense or Meaning, which is so inconsistent with it self) yet this don't prove that it is agreable to the natural Notions Men have of Things, or that there can be any Thing in the Creation that should answer such a Meaning. And tho' they appeal to Experience, yet the Truth is, that Men are so far from experiencing any such Thing, that it is impossible for 'em to have any Conception of it.

If it should be objected, that *Action* and *Passion* are doubtless Words of a contrary Signification; but to suppose that the Agent, in it's Action, is under the Power and Influence of something extrinsick, is to confound Action and Passion, and make 'em the same Thing.

I answer, That Action and Passion are doubtless, as they are sometimes used, Words of opposite Signification; but not as signifying opposite *Existences*, but only opposite *Relations*. The Words *Cause* and *Effect* are Terms of opposite Signification; but nevertheless, if I assert that the same Thing may at the same Time, in different Respects and Relations, be both *Cause* and *Effect*, this will not prove that I confound the Terms. The Soul may be both *active* and *passive* in the same Thing in different Respects, *active* with Relation to one Thing, and *passive* with Relation to another. The Word *Passion* when set in Opposition to *Action* or rather *Activeness*, is meerly a relative Term: it signifies no Effect or Cause, nor any proper Existence; but is the same with *Passiveness*, or a being passive, or a being acted upon by something. Which is a meer Relation of a Thing to some Power or Force exerted by some Cause, producing some Effect in it, or upon it. And *Action*, when set properly in Opposition to *Passion*, or *Passiveness*, is no real Existence; it is not the same with *AN Action*, but is a meer Relation: 'Tis the *Activeness* of something on another Thing, being the opposite Relation to the other, *viz.* a Relation of Power, or Force exerted by some Cause, towards another Thing, which is the Subject of the Effect of that Power. Indeed the Word *Action* is frequently used to signify something not meerly *relative*, but more *absolute*, and a real Existence; as when we say *An Action*; when the Word is not used transitively, but absolutely, for some Motion or Exercise of Body or Mind, without any Relation to any Object or Effect: And as used thus, it is not properly the opposite of *Passion*; which ordinarily signifies nothing absolute, but meerly the *Relation* of *being acted upon*. And therefore if the Word *Action* be used in the like relative Sense, then Action and Passion are only two contrary Relations. And 'tis no Ab-

ſurdity to ſuppoſe, that contrary Relations may belong to the ſame Thing, at the ſame Time, with reſpect to different Things. So to ſuppoſe, that there are Acts of the Soul by which a Man voluntarily moves, and acts upon Objects, and produces Effects, which yet themſelves are Effects of ſomething elſe, and wherein the Soul it ſelf is the Object of ſomething acting upon, and influencing that, don't at all confound Action and Paſſion. The Words may nevertheleſs be properly of oppoſite Signification: there may be as true and real a Difference between *acting* and being *cauſed to act*, tho' we ſhould ſuppoſe the Soul to be both in the ſame Volition, as there is between *living*, and *being quicken'd*, or *made to live*. 'Tis no more a Contradiction, to ſuppoſe that Action may be the Effect of ſome other Cauſe, beſides the Agent, or Being that acts, than to ſuppoſe that Life may be the Effect of ſome other Cauſe, beſides the Liver, or the Being that lives, in whom Life is cauſed to be.

The Thing which has led Men into this inconſiſtent Notion of Action, when applied to Volition, as tho' it were eſſential to this internal Action, that the Agent ſhould be ſelf-determined in it, and that the Will ſhould be the Cauſe of it, was probably this; that according to the Senſe of Mankind, and the common Uſe of Language it is ſo, with reſpect to Men's external Actions; which are what originally, and according to the vulgar Uſe and moſt proper Senſe of the Word, are called *Actions*. Men in theſe are ſelf-directed, ſelf-determined, and their Wills are the Cauſe of the Motions of their Bodies, and the external Things that are done; ſo that unleſs Men do 'em voluntarily, and of Choice, and the Action be determined by their antecedent Volition, it is no Action or Doing of theirs. Hence ſome Metaphyſicians have been led unwarily, but exceeding abſurdly, to ſuppoſe the ſame concerning Volition it ſelf, that That alſo muſt be determined by the Will; which is to be determin'd by antecedent Volition, as the Motion of the Body is; not conſidering the Contradiction it implies.

But 'tis very evident, that in the metaphyſical Diſtinction between Action and Paſſion, (tho' long ſince become common and the general Vogue) due Care has not been taken to conform Language to the Nature of Things, or to any diſtinct clear Ideas. As it is in innumerable other Philoſophical, Metaphyſical Terms, uſed in theſe Diſputes; which has occaſion'd inexpreſſible Difficulty, Contention, Errour and Confuſion.

And

And thus probably it came to be thought, that Necessity was inconsistent with Action, as these Terms are applied to Volition. First, these Terms *Action* and *Necessity* are changed from their original Meaning, as signifying external voluntary Action, and Constraint, (in which Meaning they are evidently inconsistent) to signify quite other Things, *viz.* Volition it self, and Certainty of Existence. And when the Change of Signification is made, Care is not taken to make proper Allowances and Abatements for the Difference of Sense; but still the same Things are unwarily attributed to *Action* and *Necessity*, in the new Meaning of the Words, which plainly belonged to 'em in their first Sense; and on this Ground, Maxims are established without any real Foundation, as tho' they were the most certain Truths, and the most evident Dictates of Reason.

But however strenuously it is maintain'd, that what is necessary can't be properly called Action, and that a necessary Action is a Contradiction, yet 'tis probable there are few *Arminian* Divines, who if thoroughly tried, would stand to these Principles. They will allow, that God is in the highest Sense an active Being, and the highest Fountain of Life and Action; and they would not probably deny, that those that are called God's Acts of Righteousness, Holiness and Faithfulness, are truly and properly God's *Acts*, and God is really a holy *Agent* in them: and yet I trust, they will not deny, that God necessarily acts justly and faithfully, and that it is impossible for Him to act unrighteously and unholily.

Section III.

The Reaſons why ſome think it contrary to common Senſe, *to ſuppoſe thoſe Things which are* neceſſary, *to be worthy of either* Praiſe *or* Blame.

'TIS abundantly affirmed and urged by *Arminian* Writers, that it is contrary to *common Senſe*, and the natural Notions and Apprehenſions of Mankind, to ſuppoſe otherwiſe than that Neceſſity (making no Diſtinction between natural and moral Neceſſity) is inconſiſtent with Vertue and Vice, Praiſe and Blame, Reward and Puniſhment. And their Arguments from hence have been greatly triumphed in; and have been not a little perplexing to many who have been friendly to the Truth, as clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures: It has ſeem'd to them indeed difficult, to reconcile *Calviniſtic* Doctrines with the Notions Men commonly have of Juſtice and Equity. And the true Reaſons of it ſeem to be theſe that follow.

I. 'Tis indeed a very plain Dictate of common Senſe, that natural Neceſſity is wholly inconſiſtent with juſt Praiſe or Blame. If Men do Things which in themſelves are very good, fit to be brought to paſs, and very happy Effects, properly againſt their Wills, and can't help it; or do them from a Neceſſity that is without their Wills, or with which their Wills have no Concern or Connection; then 'tis a plain Dictate of common Senſe, that it's none of their Vertue, nor any moral Good in them; and that they are not worthy to be rewarded or praiſed; or at all eſteemed, honoured or loved on that Account. And on the other Hand, that if from like Neceſſity they do thoſe Things which in Themſelves are very unhappy and pernicious, and do them becauſe they can't help it; the Neceſſity is ſuch, that it is all one whether they will them, or no; and the Reaſon why they are done, is from Neceſſity only, and not from their Wills; 'Tis a very plain Dictate of common Senſe that they are not at all to blame; there is no Vice, Fault, or moral Evil at all in the Effect done; nor are they who are thus neceſſitated

necessitated, in any wise worthy to be punished, hated, or in the least disrespected, on that Account.

In like Manner, if Things in themselves good and desirable are absolutely impossible, with a natural Impossibility, the universal Reason of Mankind teaches, that this *wholly and perfectly* excuses Persons in their not doing them.

And 'tis also a plain Dictate of common Sense, that if the doing Things in themselves Good, or avoiding Things in themselves Evil, is not *absolutely impossible*, with such a natural Impossibility, but very *difficult*, with a natural Difficulty; that is, a Difficulty prior *to*, and not at all consisting *in* Will and Inclination it self, and which would remain the same, let the Inclination be what it will; then a Person's Neglect or Omission is excused *in some Measure*, tho' not wholly; his Sin is less aggravated, than if the Thing to be done were easy. And if instead of Difficulty and Hindrance, there be a contrary natural Propensity in the State of Things, to the Thing to be done, or Effect to be brought to pass, abstracted from any Consideration of the Inclination of the Heart; tho' the Propensity be not so great as to amount to a natural Necessity; yet being some Approach to it, so that the doing the good Thing be very much from this natural Tendency in the State of Things, and but little from a good Inclination; then it is a Dictate of common Sense, that there is so much the less Vertue in what is done; and so it is less Praise-worthy and rewardable. The Reason is easy, *viz.* because such a natural Propensity or Tendency is an Approach to natural Necessity; and the greater the Propensity, still so much the nearer is the Approach to Necessity. And therefore as natural Necessity takes away or shuts out *all* Vertue, so this Propensity approaches to an Abolition of Vertue; that is, it *diminishes* it. And on the other Hand, natural Difficulty in the State of Things is an Approach to natural Impossibility. And as the latter, when it is compleat and absolute, *wholly* takes away Blame; so such Difficulty takes away *some* Blame, or diminishes Blame; and makes the Thing done to be less worthy of Punishment.

II. Men in their first Use of such Phrases as these, *Must, can't, can't help it, can't avoid it, necessary, unable, impossible, unavoidable, irresistible* &c. use them to signify a Necessity of Constraint or Restraint, a natural Necessity or Impossibility; or some Necessity that the Will has nothing to do in; which

may

may be, whether Men will or no; and which may be ſuppoſed to be juſt the ſame, let Men's Inclinations and Deſires be what they will. Such Kind of Terms in their original Uſe, I ſuppoſe among all Nations, are relative; carrying in their Signification (as was before obſerved) a Reference or Reſpect to ſome contrary Will, Deſire or Endeavour, which, it is ſuppoſed, is, or may be in the Caſe. All Men find, and begin to find in early Childhood, that there are innumerable Things that can't be done, which they deſire to do; and innumerable Things which they are averſe to, that muſt be, they can't avoid them, they will be, whether they chuſe them or no. 'Tis to expreſs this Neceſſity, which Men ſo ſoon and ſo often find, and which ſo greatly and ſo early affects them in innumerable Caſes, that ſuch Terms and Phraſes are firſt formed; and 'tis to ſignify ſuch a Neceſſity, that they are firſt uſed, and that they are moſt conſtantly uſed, in the common Affairs of Life; and not to ſignify any ſuch metaphyſical, ſpeculative and abſtract Notion, as that Connection in the Nature or Courſe of Things, which is between the Subject and Predicate of a Propoſition, and which is the Foundation of the certain Truth of that Propoſition; to ſignify which, they who employ themſelves in Philoſophical Inquiries into the firſt Origin and Metaphyſical Relations and Dependences of Things, have borrowed theſe Terms, for want of others. But we grow up from our Cradles in a Uſe of ſuch Terms and Phraſes, entirely different from this, and carrying a Senſe exceeding diverſe from that in which they are commonly uſed in the Controverſy between *Arminians* and *Calviniſts*. And it being, as was ſaid before, a Dictate of the univerſal Senſe of Mankind, evident to us as ſoon as we begin to think, that the Neceſſity ſignified by theſe Terms, in the Senſe in which we firſt learn them, does excuſe Perſons, and free them from all Fault or Blame; Hence our Idea's of Excuſableneſs or Faultleſneſs is tied to theſe Terms and Phraſes by a ſtrong Habit, which is begun in Childhood as ſoon as we begin to ſpeak, and grows up with us, and is ſtrengthned by conſtant Uſe and Cuſtom, the Connection growing ſtronger and ſtronger.

The habitual Connection which is in Men's Minds between Blameleſneſs and thoſe foremention'd Terms, *Muſt*, *cannot*, *unable*, *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *unavoidable* &c. becomes very ſtrong; becauſe as ſoon as ever Men begin to uſe Reaſon and Speech, they have Occaſion to excuſe themſelves, from the natural Neceſſity ſignified by theſe Terms, in numerous Inſtances.

Instances---- *I can't do it*---- *I could not help it.*----And all Mankind have constant and daily Occasion to use such Phrases in this Sense, to excuse themselves and others in almost all the Concerns of Life, with Respect to Disappointments, and Things that happen which concern and affect us and others, that are hurtful, or disagreable to us or them, or Things desirable that we or others fail of.

That a being accustomed to an Union of different Ideas, from early Childhood, makes the habitual Connection exceeding strong, as tho' such Connection were owing to *Nature*, is manifest in innumerable Instances. It is altogether by such an habitual Connection of Ideas, that Men judge of the Bigness or Distance of the Objects of Sight from their Appearance. Thus 'tis owing to such a Connection early established, and growing up with a Person, that he judges a Mountain, which he sees at ten Miles distance, to be bigger than his Nose, or further off than the End of it. Having been used so long to join a considerable Distance and Magnitude with such an Appearance, Men imagine it is by a Dictate of natural Sense: Whereas it would be quite otherwise with one that had his Eyes newly opened, who had been born blind: He would have the same visible Appearance, but natural Sense would dictate no such Thing concerning the Magnitude or Distance of what appeared.

III. When Men, after they had been so habituated to connect Ideas of Innocency or Blamelesness with such Terms, that the Union seems to be the Effect of meer Nature, come to hear the same Terms used, & learn to use them themselves in the foremention'd new & metaphysical Sense, to signify quite another Sort of Necessity, which has no such Kind of Relation to a contrary supposable Will and Endeavour; the Notion of plain and manifest Blamelesness, by this Means, is by a strong Prejudice, insensibly and unwarily transfer'd to a Case to which it by no Means belongs: The Change of the Use of the Terms, to a Signification which is very diverse, not being taken Notice of, or adverted to. And there are several Reasons why it is not.

1. The Terms, as used by Philosophers, are not very distinct and clear in their Meaning: few use them in a fix'd determined Sense. On the contrary, their Meaning is very vague and confused. Which is what commonly happens to the

Words uſed to ſignify Things intellectual and moral, and to expreſs what Mr. *Locke* calls *mixt Modes*. If Men had a clear and diſtinct underſtanding of what is intended by theſe metaphyſical Terms, they would be able more eaſily to compare them with their original and common Senſe; and ſo would not be ſo eaſily cheated by them. The Minds of Men are ſo eaſily led into Deluſion by no Sort of Terms in the World, as by Words of this Sort.

2. The Change of the Signification of the Terms is the more inſenſible, becauſe the Things ſignified, tho' indeed very different, yet do in ſome generals agree. In *Neceſſity*, that which is *vulgarly* ſo called, there is a ſtrong Connection between the Thing ſaid to be neceſſary, and ſomething antecedent to it, in the Order of Nature; ſo there is alſo in *philoſophical Neceſſity*. And tho' in both Kinds of Neceſſity, the Connection can't be called by that Name, with Relation to an oppoſite Will or Endeavour, to which it is *ſuperiour*; which is the Caſe in vulgar Neceſſity; yet in both, the Connection is *prior* to Will and Endeavour, and ſo in ſome Reſpect *ſuperiour*. In both Kinds of Neceſſity there is a Foundation for ſome Certainty of the Propoſition that affirms the Event.----The Terms uſed being the ſame, and the Things ſignified agreeing in theſe and ſome other general Circumſtances, and the Expreſſions as uſed by Philoſophers being not well defined, and ſo of obſcure and looſe Signification; hence Perſons are not aware of the great Difference; and the Notions of Innocence or Faultleſneſs, which were ſo ſtrongly aſſociated with them, and were ſtrictly united in their Minds, ever ſince they can remember, remain united with them ſtill, as if the Union were altogether natural and neceſſary; and they that go about to make a Separation, ſeem to them to do great Violence even to Nature it ſelf.

IV. Another Reaſon why it appears difficult to reconcile it with Reaſon, that Men ſhould be blamed for that which is neceſſary with a moral Neceſſity (which as was obſerved before is a Species of Philoſophical Neceſſity) is, that for want of due Conſideration, Men inwardly entertain that Apprehenſion, that this Neceſſity may be againſt Men's Wills and ſincere Endeavours. They go away with that Notion, that Men may truly will and wiſh and ſtrive that it may be otherwiſe; but that invincible Neceſſity ſtands in the Way. And many think thus concerning themſelves: ſome that are wicked Men think they wiſh that they were good, that they loved God and Holineſs;

but

but yet don't find that their Wishes produce the Effect.---- The Reasons why Men think thus, are as follows. (1.) They find what may be called an *indirect Willingness* to have a better Will, in the Manner before observed. For it is impossible, and a Contradiction to suppose the Will to be directly and properly against it self. And they don't consider, that this indirect Willingness is entirely a different Thing from properly willing the Thing that is the Duty and Vertue required; and that there is no Vertue in that sort of Willingness which they have. They don't consider, that the Volitions which a wicked Man may have that he loved God, are no Acts of the Will at all against the moral Evil of not loving God; but only some disagreable Consequences. But the making the requisite Distinction requires more Care of Reflection and Thought than most Men are used to. And Men thro' a Prejudice in their own Favour, are disposed to think well of their own Desires and Dispositions, and to account 'em good and vertuous, tho' their Respect to Vertue be only *indirect* and *remote*, and 'tis nothing at all that is vertuous that truly excites or terminates their Inclinations. (2.) Another Thing that insensibly leads and beguiles Men into a Supposition that this moral Necessity or Impossibility is, or may be against Men's Wills, and true Endeavours, is the Derivation and Formation of the Terms themselves, that are often used to express it, which is such as seems directly to point to, and hold this forth. Such Words, for Instance, as *unable*, *unavoidable*, *impossible*, *irresistible*; which carry a plain Reference to a supposable Power exerted, Endeavours used, Resistance made, in Opposition to the Necessity: And the Persons that hear them, not considering nor suspecting but that they are used in their proper Sense: That Sense being therefore understood, there does naturally, and as it were necessarily arise in their Minds a Supposition that it may be so indeed, that true Desires and Endeavours may take Place, but that invincible Necessity stands in the Way, and renders 'em vain and to no Effect.

V. Another Thing which makes Persons more ready to suppose it to be contrary to Reason, that Men should be exposed to the Punishments threaten'd to Sin, for doing those Things which are morally necessary, or not doing those Things morally impossible, is, that Imagination strengthens the Argument, and adds greatly to the Power and Influence of the seeming Reasons against it, from the Greatness of that Punishment. To allow that they may be justly exposed to a small Punishment, would not be so difficult. Whereas, if there

were any good Reaſon in the Caſe, if it were truly a Dictate of Reaſon that ſuch Neceſſity was inconſiſtent with Faultineſs, or juſt Puniſhment, the Demonſtration would be equally certain with reſpect to a ſmall Puniſhment, or any Puniſhment at all, as a very great one: But it is not equally eaſy to the Imagination. They that argue againſt the Juſtice of *damning* Men for thoſe Things that are thus neceſſary, ſeem to make their Argument the ſtronger, by ſetting forth the Greatneſs of the Puniſhment in ſtrong Expreſſions :----*That a Man ſhould be caſt into eternal Burnings, that he ſhould be made to fry in Hell to all Eternity, for thoſe Things which He had no Power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfruſtrable, invincible Neceſſity of doing.*------

SECTION IV.

It is agreable to common Senſe, *and* the natural Notions of Mankind, *to ſuppoſe moral Neceſſity to be conſiſtent with Praiſe and Blame, Reward and Puniſhment.*

WHETHER the Reaſons that have been given, why it appears difficult to ſome Perſons to reconcile with common Senſe the praiſing or blaming, rewarding or puniſhing thoſe Things which are morally neceſſary, are thought ſatisfactory, or not; yet it moſt evidently appears by the following Things, that if this Matter be rightly underſtood, ſetting aſide all Deluſion ariſing from the Impropriety and Ambiguity of Terms, this is not at all inconſiſtent with the natural Apprehenſions of Mankind, and that Senſe of Things which is found every where in the common People, who are furtheſt from having their Thoughts perverted from their natural Channel, by metaphyſical and philoſophical Subtilties; but on the contrary, altogether agreable *to*, and the very Voice and Dictate *of* this natural and vulgar Senſe.

I. This will appear if we conſider what the vulgar Notion of *Blame-worthineſs* is. The Idea which the common People through

through all Ages and Nations have of Faultiness, I suppose to be plainly this ; *A Person's being or doing wrong, with his own Will and Pleasure* ; containing these two Things ; 1. *His doing wrong, when he does as he pleases.* 2. *His Pleasure's being wrong.* Or in other Words, perhaps more intelligibly expressing their Notion ; *A Person's having his Heart wrong, and doing wrong from his Heart.* And this is the Sum total of the Matter.

The common People don't ascend up in their Reflections and Abstractions, to the metaphysical Sources, Relations and Dependences of Things, in order to form their Notion of Faultiness or Blame-worthiness. They don't wait till they have decided by their Refinings, what first determines the Will ; whether it be determined by something extrinsic, or intrinsic ; whether Volition determines Volition, or whether the Understanding determines the Will ; whether there be any such Thing as Metaphysicians mean by Contingence (if they have any Meaning ;) whether there be a Sort of a strange unaccountable Sovereignty in the Will, in the Exercise of which, by it's own sovereign Acts, it brings to pass all it's own sovereign Acts. They don't take any Part of their Notion of Fault or Blame from the Resolution of any such Questions. If this were the Case, there are Multitudes, yea the far greater Part of Mankind, nine Hundred and ninety-nine out of a Thousand would live and die without having any such Notion as that of Fault ever entring into their Heads, or without so much as once having any Conception that any Body was to be either blamed or commended for any Thing. To be sure, it would be a long Time before Men came to have such Notions. Whereas 'tis manifest, they are some of the first Notions that appear in Children ; who discover as soon as they can think, or speak, or act at all as rational Creatures, a Sense of Desert. And certainly, in forming their Notion of it, they make no use of Metaphysicks. All the Ground they go upon consists in these two Things ; *Experience*, and a *natural Sensation* of a certain Fitness or Agreableness which there is in uniting such moral Evil as is above described, *viz. a being or doing wrong with the Will*, and Resentment in others, and Pain inflicted on the Person in whom this moral Evil is. Which *natural Sense* is what we call by the Name of *Conscience*.

'Tis true, the common People and Children, in their Notion of a faulty Act or Deed of any Person, do suppose that it is the Person's *own Act and Deed.* But this is all that belongs to what they understand by a Thing's being a Person's *own Deed or Action* ;

Action; even that it is ſomething done by him of Choice. That ſome Exerciſe or Motion ſhould begin of it ſelf, don't belong to their Notion of *an Action*, or *Doing*. If ſo, it would belong to their Notion of it, that it is ſomething which is the Cauſe of it's own Beginning: And that is as much as to ſay, that it is before it begins to be. Nor is their Notion of *an Action* ſome Motion or Exerciſe that begins accidentally, without any Cauſe or Reaſon; for that is contrary to one of the prime Dictates of common Senſe, namely, that every Thing that begins to be, has ſome Cauſe or Reaſon why it is.

The common People, in their Notion of a faulty or praiſe-worthy Deed or Work done by any one, do ſuppoſe that the Man does it in the Exerciſe of *Liberty*. But then their Notion of Liberty is only a Perſon's having Opportunity of doing as he pleaſes. They have no Notion of Liberty conſiſting in the Will's firſt acting, and ſo cauſing it's own Acts; and determining, and ſo cauſing it's own Determinations; or chuſing, and ſo cauſing it's own Choice. Such a Notion of Liberty is what none have, but thoſe that have darken'd their own Minds with confuſed metaphyſical Speculation, and abſtruſe and ambiguous Terms. If a Man is not reſtrain'd from acting as his Will determines, or conſtrain'd to act otherwiſe; then he has Liberty, according to common Notions of Liberty, without taking into the Idea that grand Contradiction of all the Determinations of a Man's free Will being the Effects of the Determinations of his free Will.----Nor have Men commonly any Notion of Freedom conſiſting in Indifference. For if ſo, then it would be agreable to their Notion, that the greater Indifference Men act with, the more Freedom they act with; whereas the Reverſe is true. He that in acting, proceeds with the fulleſt Inclination, does what He does with the greateſt Freedom, according to common Senſe. And ſo far is it from being agreable to common Senſe, that ſuch Liberty as conſiſts in Indifference is requiſite to Praiſe or Blame, that on the contrary, the Dictate of every Man's natural Senſe thro' the World is, that the further he is from being indifferent in his acting Good or Evil, and the more he does either with full and ſtrong Inclination, the more is he eſteemed or abhorred, commended or condemned.

II. If it were inconſiſtent with the common Senſe of Mankind, that Men ſhould be either to be blamed or commended in any Volitions they have or fail of, in Caſe of moral Neceſſity or Impoſſibility; then it would ſurely alſo be agreable to the ſame Senſe and Reaſon of Mankind, that the nearer

er the Case approaches to such a moral Necessity or Impossibility, either through a strong antecedent moral Propensity on the one Hand, * or a great antecedent Opposition and Difficulty on the other, the nearer does it approach to a being neither blameable nor commendable; so that Acts exerted with such preceeding Propensity would be worthy of proportionably less Praise; and when omitted, the Act being attended with such Difficulty, the Omission would be worthy of the less Blame. It is so, as was observed before, with natural Necessity and Impossibility, Propensity and Difficulty: As 'tis a plain Dictate of the Sense of all Mankind, that natural Necessity and Impossibility takes away *all* Blame and Praise; and therefore, that the nearer the Approach is to these through previous Propensity or Difficulty, so Praise and Blame are proportionably *diminished*. And if it were as much a Dictate of common Sense, that moral Necessity of doing, or Impossibility of avoiding, takes away *all* Praise and Blame, as that natural Necessity or Impossibility does this; then, by a perfect Parity of Reason, it would be as much the Dictate of common Sense, that an *Approach* to moral Necessity of doing, or Impossibility of avoiding, *diminishes* Praise and Blame, as that an Approach to natural Necessity and Impossibility does so. 'Tis equally the Voice of common Sense, that Persons are *excusable in Part*, in neglecting Things difficult against their Wills, as that they are *excusable wholly* in neglecting Things impossible against their Wills. And if it made no Difference, whether the Impossibility were natural and against the Will, or moral, lying in the Will, with regard to Excusableness; so neither would it make any Difference, whether the Difficulty, or Approach to Necessity be natural against the Will, or moral, lying in the Propensity of the Will.

But 'tis apparent, that the Reverse of these Things is true. If there be an Approach to a moral Necessity in a Man's Exertion of good Acts of Will, they being the Exercise of a strong Propensity to Good, and a very powerful Love to Vertue; 'tis so far from being the Dictate of common Sense, that He is less vertuous, and the less to be esteem'd, loved and praised; that 'tis agreable to the natural Notions of all Mankind that he is so much the better Man, worthy of greater Respect, and higher Commendation. And the stronger the Inclination is, and the nearer it approaches to Necessity in that Respect;

* 'Tis here argued, on Supposition that not all Propensity implies moral Necessity, but only some very high Degrees; which none will deny.

Reſpect, or to Impoſſibility of neglecting the vertuous Act, or of doing a vicious one ; ſtill the more vertuous, and worthy of higher Commendation. And on the other Hand, if a Man exerts evil Acts of Mind ; as for Inſtance, Acts of Pride or Malice, from a rooted and ſtrong Habit or Principle of Haughtineſs and Maliciouſneſs, and a violent Propenſity of Heart to ſuch Acts ; according to the natural Senſe of all Men, he is ſo far from being the leſs hateful and blameable on that Account, that he is ſo much the more worthy to be deteſted and condemned by all that obſerve Him.

Moreover, 'tis manifeſt that it is no Part of the Notion which Mankind commonly have of a blameable or praiſe-worthy Act of the Will, that it is an Act which is not determined by an antecedent Bias or Motive, but by the ſovereign Power of the Will it ſelf ; becauſe if ſo, the greater Hand ſuch Cauſes have in determining any Acts of the Will, ſo much the leſs vertuous or vicious would they be accounted ; and the leſs Hand, the more vertuous or vicious. Whereas the Reverſe is true : Men don't think a good Act to be the leſs praiſe-worthy, for the Agent's being much determined in it by a good Inclination or a good Motive ; but the more. And if good Inclination or Motive has but little Influence in determining the Agent, they don't think his Act ſo much the more vertuous, but the leſs. And ſo concerning evil Acts, which are determined by evil Motives or Inclinations.

Yea, if it be ſuppoſed that good or evil Diſpoſitions are implanted in the Hearts of Men by Nature it ſelf (which, it is certain, is vulgarly ſuppoſed in innumerable Caſes) yet it is not commonly ſuppoſed that Men are worthy of no Praiſe or Diſpraiſe for ſuch Diſpoſitions ; altho' what is natural is undoubtedly neceſſary, Nature being prior to all Acts of the Will whatſoever. Thus for Inſtance, if a Man appears to be of a very haughty or malicious Diſpoſition, and is ſuppoſed to be ſo by his natural Temper, 'tis no vulgar Notion, no Dictate of the common Senſe and Apprehenſion of Men, that ſuch Diſpoſitions are no Vices or moral Evils, or that ſuch Perſons are not worthy of Diſeſteem, Odium and Diſhonour ; or that the proud or malicious Acts which flow from ſuch natural Diſpoſitions, are worthy of no Reſentment. Yea, ſuch vile natural Diſpoſitions, and the Strength of 'em, will commonly be mention'd rather as an Aggravation of the wicked Acts that come from ſuch a Fountain, than an Extenuation of 'em. It's being natural for Men to act thus, is often obſerved by

Men

Men in the Height of their Indignation: They will ſay, "'Tis "his very Nature: He is of a vile natural Temper; 'tis as "natural to Him to act ſo, as it is to breathe; He can't help "ſerving the Devil, &c." But it is not thus with Regard to hurtful miſchievous Things that any are the Subjects or Occaſions of by *natural Neceſſity*, againſt their Inclinations. In ſuch a Caſe, the Neceſſity, by the common Voice of Mankind, will be ſpoken of as a full Excuſe.----Thus 'tis very plain, that common Senſe makes a vaſt Difference between theſe two Kinds of Neceſſity, as to the Judgment it makes of their Influence on the moral Quality and Deſert of Men's Actions.

And theſe Dictates of Men's Minds are ſo natural and neceſſary, that it may be very much doubted whether the *Arminians* themſelves have ever got rid of 'em; yea, their greateſt Doctors, that have gone furtheſt in Defence of their metaphyſical Notions of Liberty, and have brought their Arguments to their greateſt Strength, and as they ſuppoſe to a Demonſtration, againſt the Conſiſtence of Vertue and Vice with any Neceſſity: 'Tis to be queſtion'd, whether there is ſo much as one of them, but that if He ſuffered very much from the injurious Acts of a Man under the Power of an invincible Haughtineſs and Malignancy of Temper, would not, from the foremention'd natural Senſe of Mind, reſent it far otherwiſe, than if as great Sufferings came upon Him from the Wind that blows, and Fire that burns by natural Neceſſity; and otherwiſe than he would, if he ſuffered as much from the Conduct of a Man perfectly delirious; yea, tho' he firſt brought his Diſtraction upon Him ſome Way by his own Fault.

Some ſeem to diſdain the Diſtinction that we make between *natural* and *moral Neceſſity*, as tho' it were altogether impertinent in this Controverſy: "That which is neceſſary (ſay they) is "neceſſary; it is that which muſt be, and can't be prevented. "And that which is impoſſible, is impoſſible, and can't be done: "and therefore none can be to blame for not doing it." And ſuch Compariſons are made uſe of, as the commanding of a Man to walk who has loſt his Legs, and condemning and puniſhing Him for not obeying; Inviting and calling upon a Man, who is ſhut up in a ſtrong Priſon, to come forth, &c. But in theſe Things *Arminians* are very unreaſonable. Let common Senſe determine whether there be not a great Difference between thoſe two Caſes; the one, that of a Man who has offended his Prince, and is caſt into Priſon; and after he has lain there a while, the King comes to him, calls him to

come forth toHim ; and tells him that if he will do ſo,and will fall down before Him, and humbly beg his Pardon, he ſhall be forgiven, and ſet at Liberty, and alſo be greatly enrich'd, and advanced to Honour : The Priſoner heartily repents of the Folly and Wickedneſs of his Offence againſt his Prince, is thoroughly diſpoſed to abaſe Himſelf, and accept of the King's Offer ; but is confined by ſtrong Walls, with Gates of Braſs, and Barrs of Iron. The other Caſe is, that of a Man who is of a very unreaſonable Spirit, of a haughty, ungrateful, wilful Diſpoſition ; and moreover, has been brought up in traiterious Principles ; and has his Heart poſſeſſed with an extream and inveterate Enmity to his lawful Sovereign ; and for his Rebellion is caſt into Priſon, and lies long there, loaden with heavy Chains, and in miſerable Circumſtances. At length the compaſſionate Prince comes to the Priſon, orders his Chains to be knocked off, and his Priſon-Doors to be ſet wide open ; calls to him, and tells Him, if He will come forth to him, and fall down before him, acknowledge that he has treated him unworthily, and aſk his Forgiveneſs ; He ſhall be forgiven, ſet at Liberty, and ſet in a Place of great Dignity and Profit in his Court. But He is ſo ſtout and ſtomachful, and full of haughtyMalignity,that He can't be willing to accept the Offer : his rooted ſtrong Pride and Malice have perfect Power over him, and as it were bind him, by binding his Heart: The Oppoſition of his Heart has the Maſtery over Him, having an Influence on his Mind far ſuperiour to the King's Grace andCondeſcenſion,and to all his kindOffers & Promiſes. Now, is it agreable to common Senſe, to aſſert and ſtand to it, that there is no Difference between theſe two Caſes, as to any Worthineſs of Blame in thePriſoners ; becauſe, forſooth, there is a Neceſſity in both, and the required Act in each Caſe is impoſſible ? 'Tis true, a Man's evil Diſpoſitions may be as ſtrong and immovable as the Bars of a Caſtle. But who can't ſee, that when a Man, in the latter Caſe, is ſaid to be *unable* to obey the Command, the Expreſſion is uſed improperly, and not in the Senſe it has originally and in common Speech ? And that it may properly be ſaid to be in theRebel's Power to come out of Priſon, ſeeing he can eaſily do it if he pleaſes ; tho' by Reaſon of his vile Temper of Heart which is fix'd and rooted, 'tis impoſſible that it ſhould pleaſe Him ?

Upon the whole, I preſume there is no Perſon of good Underſtanding, who impartially conſiders the Things which have been obſerved, but will allow that 'tis not evident from the Dictates of the common Senſe, or natural Notions of Mankind,

kind, that moral Necessity is inconsistent with Praise and Blame. And therefore, if the *Arminians* would prove any such Inconsistency, it must be by some philosophical and metaphysical Arguments, and not common Sense.

There is a grand Illusion in the pretended Demonstration of *Arminians* from common Sense. The main Strength of all theseDemonstrations, lies in that Prejudice that arises thro' the insensible Change of the Use and Meaning of such Terms as *Liberty*, *able*, *unable*, *necessary*, *impossible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, *Action*, &c. from their original and vulgarSense, to a metaphysicalSense entirely diverse ; and the strong Connection of the Ideas of Blamelesness &c. with some of these Terms, by an Habit contracted and established, while these Terms were used in their first Meaning. This Prejudice and Delusion is the Foundation of all those Positions they lay down as Maxims, by which most of the Scriptures, which they alledge in this Controversy, are interpreted, and on which all their pompous Demonstrations from Scripture and Reason depend. From this secret Delusion and Prejudice they have almost all their Advantages : 'Tis the Strength of their Bulwarks, and the Edge of their Weapons. And this is the main Ground of all the Right they have to treat their Neighbours in so assuming a Manner, and to insult others, perhaps as wise and good as themselves, as *weak Bigots*, *Men that dwell in the dark Caves of Superstition*, *perversly set*, *obstinately shutting their Eyes against the Noon-day Light*, *Enemies to common Sense*, *maintaining the first-born of Absurdities*, &c. &c. But perhaps an impartial Consideration of the Things which have been observed in the preceeding Parts of this Enquiry, may enable the Lovers of Truth better to judge, whose Doctrine is indeed *absurd*, *abstruse*, *self-contradictory*, and inconsistent with common Sense, and many Ways repugnant to the universal Dictates of the Reason of Mankind.

Corol. From Things which have been observed, it will follow, that it is agreable to common Sense to suppose, that the glorified Saints have not their Freedom at all diminish'd, in any Respect ; and that God Himself has the highest possible Freedom, according to the true and proper Meaning of the Term ; and that He is in the highest possible respect an Agent, and active in the Exercise of his infinite Holiness ; tho' He acts therein in the highest Degree necessarily : and his Actions of this Kind are, in the highest, most absolutely perfect Manner vertuous and praise-worthy ; and are so, for that very Reason, because they are most perfectly necessary.

Section V.

Concerning thoſe Objections, *that this Scheme of Neceſſity renders all* Means and Endeavours *for the avoiding of Sin, or the obtaining Vertue and Holineſs*, vain, and to no Purpoſe; *and that it makes Men no more than meer* Machines *in Affairs of Morality and Religion.*

Arminians ſay, if it be ſo, that Sin and Vertue come to paſs by a Neceſſity conſiſting in a ſure Connection of Cauſes and Effects, Antecedents and Conſequents, it can never be worth the while to uſe any Means or Endeavours to obtain the one, and avoid the other; ſeeing no Endeavours can alter the Futurity of the Event, which is become neceſſary by a Connection already eſtabliſhed.

But I deſire, that this Matter may be fully conſidered; and that it may be examined with a thorough Strictneſs, whether it will follow that Endeavours and Means, in order to avoid or obtain any future Thing, muſt be more in vain, on the Suppoſition of ſuch a Connection of Antecedents and Conſequents, than if the contrary be ſuppoſed.

For Endeavours to be in vain, is for 'em not to be ſucceſsful; that is to ſay, for 'em not eventually to be the Means of the Thing aimed at, which can't be, but in one of theſe two Ways; either, *Firſt*, That altho' the Means are uſed, yet the Event aimed at don't follow: Or, *Secondly*, If the Event does follow, it is not becauſe of the Means, or from any Connection or Dependence of the Event on the Means, the Event would have come to paſs, as well without the Means, as with them. If either of theſe two Things are the Caſe, then the Means are not properly ſucceſsful, and are truly in vain. The Succeſsfulneſs or Unſucceſsfulneſs of Means, in order to an Effect, or their being in vain or not in vain, conſiſts in thoſe Means being connected, or not connected, with the Effect, in ſuch

ſuch a Manner as this, *viz.* That the Effect is *with* the Means, and not *without* them; or, that the Being of the Effect is, on the one Hand, connected with the Means, and the Want of the Effect, on the other Hand, is connected with the Want of the Means. If there be ſuch a Connection as this between Means and End, the Means are not in vain: The more there is of ſuch a Connection, the further they are from being in vain; and the leſs of ſuch a Connection, the more are they in vain.

Now therefore the Queſtion to be anſwered, (in order to determine, whether it follows from this Doctrine of the neceſſary Connection between foregoing Things and conſequent ones, that Means uſed in order to any Effect, are more in vain than they would be otherwiſe) is, Whether it follows from it, that there is leſs of the forementioned Connection between Means and Effect; that is, Whether on the Suppoſition of there being a real and true Connection between antecedent Things and conſequent ones, there muſt be leſs of a Connection between Means and Effect, than on the Suppoſition of there being no fix'd Connection between antecedent Things and conſequent ones: And the very ſtating of this Queſtion is ſufficient to anſwer it. It muſt appear to every one that will open his Eyes, that this Queſtion can't be affirmed, without the groſſeſt Abſurdity and Inconſiſtence. Means are foregoing Things, and Effects are following Things: And if there were no Connection between foregoing Things, and following ones, there could be no Connection between Means and End; and ſo all Means would be wholly vain and fruitleſs. For 'tis by Vertue of ſome Connection only, that they become ſucceſsful: 'Tis ſome Connection obſerved, or revealed, or otherwiſe known, between antecedent Things and following ones, that is what directs in the Choice of Means. And if there were no ſuch Thing as an eſtabliſh'd Connection, there could be no Choice, as to Means; one Thing would have no more Tendency to an Effect, than another; there would be no ſuch Thing as Tendency in the Caſe. All thoſe Things which are ſucceſsful Means of other Things, do therein prove connected Antecedents of them: And therefore to aſſert, that a fix'd Connection between Antecedents and Conſequents makes Means vain and uſeleſs, or ſtands in the Way to hinder the Connection between Means and End, is juſt ſo ridiculous, as to ſay, that a Connection between Antecedents and Conſequents ſtands in the Way to hinder a Connection between Antecedents and Conſequents.

Nor

Nor can any ſuppoſed Connection of the Succeſſion or Train of Antecedents and Conſequents, from the very Beginning of all Things, the Connection being made already ſure and neceſſary, either by eſtabliſh'd Laws of Nature, or by theſe together with a Decree of ſovereign immediate Interpoſitions of divine Power, on ſuch and ſuch Occaſions, or any other Way (if any other there be;) I ſay, no ſuch neceſſary Connection of a Series of Antecedents and Conſequents can in the leaſt tend to hinder, but that the Means we uſe may belong to the Series; and ſo may be ſome of thoſe Antecedents which are connected with the Conſequents we aim at, in the eſtabliſh'd Courſe of Things. Endeavours which we uſe, are Things that exiſt; and therefore they belong to the general Chain of Events; all the Parts of which Chain are ſuppoſed to be connected: And ſo Endeavours are ſuppoſed to be connected with ſome Effects, or ſome conſequent Things, or other. And certainly this don't hinder but that the Events they are connected with, may be thoſe which we aim at, and which we chuſe, becauſe we judge 'em moſt likely to have a Connection with thoſe Events, from the eſtabliſh'd Order and Courſe of Things which we obſerve, or from ſomething in divine Revelation.

Let us ſuppoſe a real and ſure Connection between a Man's having his Eyes open in the clear Day-light, with good Organs of Sight, and Seeing; ſo that Seeing is connected with his opening his Eyes, and not ſeeing with his not opening his Eyes; and alſo the like Connection between ſuch a Man's attempting to open his Eyes, and his actually doing it: The ſuppoſed eſtabliſhed Connection between theſe Antecedents and Conſequents, let the Connection be never ſo ſure and neceſſary, certainly don't prove that it is in vain, for a Man in ſuch Circumſtances to attempt to open his Eyes, in order to ſeeing: His aiming at that Event, and the Uſe of the Means, being the Effect of his Will, don't break the Connection, or hinder the Succeſs.

So that the Objection we are upon, don't lie againſt the Doctrine of the Neceſſity of Events by a Certainty of Connection and Conſequence: On the contrary, it is truly forcible againſt the *Arminian* Doctrine of Contingence and Self-determination; which is inconſiſtent with ſuch a Connection. If there be no Connection between thoſe Events wherein Vertue and Vice conſiſt, and any Thing antecedent; then there is no Connection between theſe Evens and any Means or Endeavours

uſed

uſed in order to them : And if ſo, then thoſe Means muſt be in vain. The leſs there is of Connection between foregoing Things and following ones, ſo much the leſs there is between Means and End, Endeavours and Succeſs ; and in the ſame Proportion are Means and Endeavours ineffectual and in vain.

It will follow from *Arminian* Principles, that there is no Degree of Connection between Vertue or Vice, and any foregoing Event or Thing : Or in other Words, That the Determination of the Exiſtence of Vertue or Vice don't in the leaſt depend on the Influence of any Thing that comes to paſs antecedently, from which the Determination of its Exiſtence is, as its Cauſe, Means, or Ground ; becauſe, ſo far as it is ſo, it is not from Self-determination : And therefore, ſo far there is nothing of the Nature of Vertue or Vice. And ſo it follows, that Vertue and Vice are not at all, in any Degree, dependent upon, or connected with any foregoing Event or Exiſtence, as its Cauſe, Ground, or Means. And if ſo, then all foregoing Means muſt be totally in vain.

Hence it follows, that there cannot, in any Conſiſtence with the *Arminian* Scheme, be any reaſonable Ground of ſo much as a Conjecture concerning the Conſequence of any Means and Endeavours, in order to eſcaping Vice or obtaining Vertue, or any Choice or Preference of Means, as having a greater Probability of Succeſs by ſome than others ; either from any natural Connection or Dependence of the End on the Means, or through any divine Conſtitution, or revealed Way of God's beſtowing or bringing to paſs theſe Things, in Conſequence of any Means, Endeavours, Prayers or Deeds. Conjecture in this latter Caſe depends on a Suppoſition that God himſelf is the Giver, or determining Cauſe of the Events ſought : But if they depend on Self-determination, then God is not the determining or diſpoſing Author of them : And if theſe Things are not of his Diſpoſal, then no Conjecture can be made from any Revelation he has given concerning any Way or Method of his Diſpoſal of them.

Yea, on theſe Principles, it will not only follow that Men can't have any reaſonable Ground of Judgment or Conjecture, that their Means and Endeavours to obtain Vertue or avoid Vice, will be ſucceſsful ; but they may be ſure they will not ; they may be certain, that they will be in vain ; and that if ever the Thing which they ſeek comes to paſs, it will not be at all owing to the Means they uſe. For Means and Endeavours

deavours can have no Effect at all; in Order to obtain the End, but in one of theſe two Ways; either (1.) Through a natural Tendency and Influence, to prepare and diſpoſe the Mind more to vertuous Acts, either by cauſing the Diſpoſition of the Heart to be more in Favour of ſuch Acts, or by bringing the Mind more into the View of powerful Motives and Inducements: Or, (2.) By putting Perſons more in the Way of God's Beſtowment of the Benefit. But neither of theſe can be the Caſe. *Not the latter*; for, as has been juſt now obſerved, it don't conſiſt with the *Arminian* Notion of Self-determination, which they ſuppoſe eſſential to Vertue, that God ſhould be the Beſtower, or (which is the ſame Thing) the determining, diſpoſing Author of Vertue. *Not the former*; for natural Influence and Tendency ſuppoſes Cauſality and Connection; and that ſuppoſes Neceſſity of Event, which is inconſiſtent with *Arminian* Liberty. A Tendency of Means, by biaſſing the Heart in Favour of Vertue, or by bringing the Will under the Influence and Power of Motives in its Determinations, are both inconſiſtent with *Arminian* Liberty of Will, conſiſting in Indifference, and ſovereign Self-determination, as has been largely demonſtrated.

But for the more full Removal of this Prejudice againſt that Doctrine of Neceſſity which has been maintain'd, as though it tended to encourage a total Neglect of all Endeavours as vain; the following Things may be conſidered.

The Queſtion is not, Whether Men may not thus improve this Doctrine: We know that many true and wholeſome Doctrines are abuſed: But, Whether the Doctrine gives any juſt Occaſion for ſuch an Improvement; or whether, on the Suppoſition of the Truth of the Doctrine, ſuch a Uſe of it would not be unreaſonable? If any ſhall affirm, that it would not, but that the very Nature of the Doctrine is ſuch as gives juſt Occaſion for it, it muſt be on this Suppoſition; namely, That ſuch an invariable Neceſſity of all Things already ſettled, muſt render the Interpoſition of all Means, Endeavours, Concluſions or Actions of ours, in order to the obtaining any future End whatſoever, perfectly inſignificant; becauſe they can't in the leaſt alter or vary the Courſe and Series of Things, in any Event or Circumſtance; all being already fixed unalterably by Neceſſity: And that therefore 'tis Folly, for Men to uſe any Means *for any End*; but their Wiſdom, to ſave themſelves the Trouble of Endeavours, and take their Eaſe. No Perſon can draw ſuch an Inference from this Doctrine,

and

and come to ſuch a Concluſion, without contradicting himſelf, and going counter to the very Principles he pretends to act upon: For he comes to a Concluſion, and takes a Courſe, *in order to an End*, even *his Eaſe*, or the ſaving himſelf from Trouble; he ſeeks ſomething future, and uſes Means in Order to a future Thing, even in his drawing up that Concluſion, that he will ſeek nothing, and uſe no Means in order to any Thing future; he ſeeks his future Eaſe, and the Benefit and Comfort of Indolence. If prior Neceſſity that determines all Things, makes vain all Actions or Concluſions of ours, in order to any Thing future; then it makes vain all Concluſions and Conduct of ours, in order to our future Eaſe. The Meaſure of our Eaſe, with the Time, Manner and every Circumſtance of it, is already fix'd, by all-determining Neceſſity, as much as any Thing elſe. If he ſays within himſelf, "What "future Happineſs or Miſery I ſhall have, is already in Effect "determined by the neceſſary Courſe and Connection of "Things; therefore I will ſave myſelf the Trouble of Labour "and Diligence, which can't add to my determin'd Degree "of Happineſs, or diminiſh my Miſery; but will take my "Eaſe, and will enjoy the Comfort of Sloth and Negligence." Such a Man contradicts himſelf: He ſays, the Meaſure of his future Happineſs and Miſery is already fix'd, and he won't try to diminiſh the one, nor add to the other: But yet in his very Concluſion, he contradicts this; for he takes up this Concluſion, *to add to his future Happineſs*, by the Eaſe and Comfort of his Negligence; and to diminiſh his future Trouble and Miſery, by ſaving himſelf the Trouble of uſing Means and taking Pains.

Therefore Perſons can't reaſonably make this Improvement of the Doctrine of Neceſſity, that they will go into a voluntary Negligence of Means for their own Happineſs. For the Principles they muſt go upon, in order to this, are inconſiſtent with their making any Improvement at all of the Doctrine: For to make ſome Improvement of it, is to be influenced by it, to come to ſome voluntary Concluſion, in Regard to their own Conduct, with ſome View or Aim: But this, as has been ſhown, is inconſiſtent with the Principles they pretend to act upon. In ſhort, the Principles are ſuch as cannot be acted upon at all, or in any Reſpect, conſiſtently. And therefore in every Pretence of acting upon them, or making any Improvement at all of them, there is a Self-contradiction.

As to that Objection againſt the Doctrine which I have endeavoured to prove, that it makes Men no more than meer Machines; I would ſay, that notwithſtanding this Doctrine, Man is entirely, perfectly and unſpeakably different from a meer Machine, in that he has Reaſon and Underſtanding, and has a Faculty of Will, and ſo is capable of Volition and Choice; and in that, his Will is guided by the Dictates or Views of his Underſtanding; and in that his external Actions and Behaviour, and in many Reſpect alſo his Thoughts, and the Exerciſes of his Mind, are ſubject to his Will; ſo that he has Liberty to act according to his Choice, and do what he pleaſes; and by Means of theſe Things, is capable of moral Habits and moral Acts, ſuch Inclinations and Actions as according to the common Senſe of Mankind, are worthy of Praiſe, Eſteem, Love and Reward; or on the contrary, of Diſeſteem, Deteſtation, Indignation and Puniſhment.

In theſe Things is all the Difference from meer Machines, as to Liberty and Agency, that would be any Perfection, Dignity or Privilege, in any Reſpect: All the Difference that can be deſired, and all that can be conceived of; and indeed all that the Pretenſions of the *Arminians* themſelves come to, as they are forced often to explain themſelves. (Tho' their Explications overthrow and aboliſh the Things aſſerted, and pretended to be explained) For they are forced to explain a ſelf-determining Power of Will, by a Power in the Soul, to determine as it chuſes or wills; which comes to no more than this, that a Man has a Power of chuſing, and in many Inſtances can do as he chuſes. Which is quite a different Thing from that Contradiction, his having Power of chuſing his firſt Act of Choice in the Caſe.

Or if their Scheme makes any other Difference than this, between Men and Machines, it is for the worſe: It is ſo far from ſuppoſing Men to have a Dignity and Privilege above Machines, that it makes the Manner of their being determined ſtill more unhappy. Whereas Machines are guided by an underſtanding Cauſe, by the ſkilful Hand of the Workman or Owner; the Will of Man is left to the Guidance of nothing, but abſolute blind Contingence.

SECTION VI.

Concerning that Objection *againſt the Doctrine which has been maintain'd, that it agrees with the* Stoical *Doctrine of* Fate, *and the Opinions of Mr.* Hobbes.

WHEN *Calviniſts* oppoſe the *Arminian* Notion of the Freedom of Will, and Contingence of Volition, and inſiſt that there are no Acts of the Will, nor any other Events whatſoever, but what are attended with ſome Kind of Neceſſity; their Oppoſers cry out of them, as agreeing with the antient *Stoicks* in their Doctrine of *Fate*, and with Mr. *Hobbes* in his Opinion of *Neceſſity*.

It would not be worth while, to take Notice of ſo impertinent an Objection, had it not been urged by ſome of the chief *Arminian* Writers.---- There were many important Truths maintain'd by the antient *Greek* and *Roman* Philoſophers, and eſpecially the *Stoicks*, that are never the worſe for being held by them. The *Stoic* Philoſophers, by the general Agreement of Chriſtian Divines, and even *Arminian* Divines, were the greateſt, wiſeſt and moſt vertuous of all the Heathen Philoſophers; and in their Doctrine and Practice came the neareſt to Chriſtianity of any of their Sects. How frequently are the Sayings of theſe Philoſophers, in many of the Writings and Sermons, even of *Arminian* Divines, produced, not as Arguments of the Falſeneſs of the Doctrines which they delivered, but as a Confirmation of ſome of the greateſt Truths of the Chriſtian Religion, relating to the Unity and Perfections of the Godhead, a future State, the Duty and Happineſs of Mankind, &c. as obſerving how the Light of Nature and Reaſon in the wiſeſt and beſt of the Heathen, harmonized with, and confirms the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

And it is very remarkable concerning Dr. *Whitby*, that altho' He alledges the Agreement of the *Stoicks* with us, wherein He ſuppoſes they maintain'd the like Doctrine with us, as an Argument againſt the Truth of our Doctrine; yet this very Dr. *Whitby* alledges the Agreement of the *Stoicks* with the *Arminians*,

wherein he ſuppoſes they taught the ſame Doctrine with them, as an Argument for the Truth of their Doctrine. * So that when the *Stoicks* agree with *them*, this (it ſeems) is a Confirmation of their Doctrine, and a Confutation of ours, as ſhewing that our Opinions are contrary to the natural Senſe & common Reaſon of Mankind: Nevertheleſs, when the *Stoicks* agree with *us*, it argues no ſuch Thing in our Favour; but on the contrary, is a great Argument againſt us, and ſhews our Doctrine to be Heatheniſh.

It is obſerved by ſome *Calviniſtic* Writers, that the *Arminians* ſymbolize with the *Stoicks*, in ſome of thoſe Doctrines wherein they are oppoſed by the *Calviniſts*; particularly in their denying an original, innate, total Corruption and Depravity of Heart; and in what they hold of Man's Ability to make Himſelf truly vertuous and conformed to God;--- and in ſome other Doctrines.

It may be further obſerved, 'tis certainly no better Objection againſt our Doctrine, that it agrees in ſome Reſpects with the Doctrine of the antient *Stoic* Philoſophers, than it is againſt theirs, wherein they differ from us, that it agrees in ſome Reſpects with the Opinion of the very worſt of the Heathen Philoſophers, the Followers of *Epicurus*, that Father of Atheiſm and Licentiouſneſs, and with the Doctrine of the *Sadducees* and *Jeſuits*.

I am not much concerned to know preciſely what the antient *Stoic* Philoſophers held concerning *Fate*, in order to determine what is Truth; as tho' it were a ſure Way to be in the right, to take good Heed to differ from them. It ſeems that they differed among themſelves; and probably the Doctrine of *Fate*, as maintain'd by moſt of 'em, was in ſome Reſpects erroneous. But whatever their Doctrine was, if any of 'em held ſuch a Fate, as is repugnant to any Liberty conſiſting in our doing as we pleaſe, I utterly deny ſuch a Fate. If they held any ſuch Fate, as is not conſiſtent with the common and univerſal Notions that Mankind have of Liberty, Activity, moral Agency, Vertue and Vice; I diſclaim any ſuch Thing, and think I have demonſtrated that the Scheme I maintain is no ſuch Scheme. If the *Stoicks* by *Fate* meant any Thing of ſuch a Nature, as can be ſuppoſed to ſtand in the Way of the Advantage and Benefit of the Uſe of Means and Endeavours, or makes

* *Whitby* on the five Points, *Edit.* 3. P. 325, 326, 327.

makes it leſs worth the while for Men to deſire, and ſeek after any Thing wherein their Vertue and Happineſs conſiſts; I hold no Doctrine that is clog'd with any ſuch Inconvenience, any more than any other Scheme whatſoever; and by no Means ſo much as the *Arminian* Scheme of Contingence; as has been ſhewn. If they held any ſuch Doctrine of univerſal Fatality, as is inconſiſtent with any Kind of Liberty, that is or can be any Perfection, Dignity, Privilege or Benefit, or any Thing deſirable, in any Reſpect, for any intelligent Creature, or indeed with any Liberty that is poſſible or conceivable; I embrace no ſuch Doctrine. If they held any ſuch Doctrine of Fate as is inconſiſtent with the World's being in all Things ſubject to the Diſpoſal of an intelligent wiſe Agent, that preſides, not as the *Soul* of the World, but as the ſovereign *Lord* of the Univerſe, governing all Things by proper Will, Choice and Deſign, in the Exerciſe of the moſt perfect Liberty conceivable, without Subjection to any Conſtraint, or being properly under the Power or Influence of any Thing before, above or without himſelf; I wholly renounce any ſuch Doctrine.

As to Mr. *Hobbes*'s maintaining the ſame Doctrine concerning Neceſſity;---I confeſs, it happens I never read Mr. *Hobbes*. Let his Opinion be what it will, we need not reject all Truth which is demonſtrated by clear Evidence, meerly becauſe it was once held by ſome bad Man. This great Truth, *that Jeſus is the Son of God*, was not ſpoil'd becauſe it was once and again proclaimed with a loud Voice by the Devil. If Truth is ſo defiled becauſe it is ſpoken by the Mouth, or written by the Pen of ſome ill-minded miſchievous Man, that it muſt never be received, we ſhall never know when we hold any of the moſt precious and evident Truths by a ſure Tenure. And if Mr. *Hobbes* has made a bad Uſe of this Truth, that is to be lamented: but the Truth is not to be tho't worthy of Rejection on that Account. 'Tis common for the Corruptions of the Hearts of evil Men, to abuſe the beſt Things to vile Purpoſes.

I might alſo take Notice of it's having been obſerved, that the *Arminians* agree with Mr. *Hobbes* † in many more Things than the *Calviniſts*. As, in what he is ſaid to hold concerning Original Sin, in denying the Neceſſity of ſupernatural Illumination, in denying infuſed Grace, in denying the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith alone; and other Things.

† Dr. *Gill*, in his Anſwer to Dr. *Whitby*. Vol. 3. P. 183, &c.

SECTION VII.

Concerning the Neceſſity *of the* Divine Will.

SOME may poſſibly object againſt what has been ſuppoſed of the Abſurdity and Inconſiſtence of a ſelf-determining Power in the Will, and the Impoſſibility of it's being otherwiſe, than that the Will ſhould be determined in every Caſe by ſome Motive, and by a Motive which (as it ſtands in the View of the Underſtanding) is of ſuperiour Strength to any appearing on the other Side; That if theſe Things are true, it will follow, that not only the Will of created Minds, but the Will of *God Himſelf* is neceſſary in all it's Determinations. Concerning which ſays the Author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of Will in God and in the Creature* (Pag. 85, 86.) "What ſtrange Doctrine is this, contrary to all our Ideas of "the Dominion of God? Does it not deſtroy the Glory of "his Liberty of Choice, and take away from the Creator and "Governour and Benefactor of the World, that moſt free and "ſovereign Agent, all the Glory of this Sort of Freedom? "Does it not ſeem to make Him a Kind of mechanical Me-"dium of Fate, and introduce Mr. *Hobbes*'s Doctrine of Fata-"lity and Neceſſity, into all Things that God hath to do "with? Does it not ſeem to repreſent the bleſſed God, as a "Being of vaſt Underſtanding, as well as Power and Effi-"ciency, but ſtill to leave Him without a Will to chuſe among "all the Objects within his View? In ſhort, it ſeems to make "the bleſſed God a Sort of almighty Miniſter of Fate, under "it's univerſal and ſupream Influence; as it was the profeſs'd "Sentiment of ſome of the Antients, that Fate was above the "Gods."

This is declaiming, rather than arguing; and an Application to Men's Imaginations and Prejudices, rather than to meer Reaſon.---- But I would calmly endeavour to conſider whether there be any Reaſon in this frightful Repreſentation.----But before I enter upon a particular Conſideration of the Matter, I would obſerve this: That 'tis reaſonable to ſuppoſe, it ſhould be much more difficult to expreſs or conceive Things according to exact metaphyſical Truth, relating to the Nature and Manner of the Exiſtence of Things in the divine Underſtanding and Will, and the Operation of theſe Faculties (if I may

ſo

ſo call them) of the divine Mind, than in the human Mind; which is infinitely more within our View, and nearer to a Proportion to the Meaſure of our Comprehenſion, and more commenſurate to the Uſe and Import of human Speech. Language is indeed very deficient, in Regard of Terms to expreſs preciſe Truth concerning our own Minds, and their Faculties and Operations. Words were firſt formed to expreſs external Things; and thoſe that are applied to expreſs Things internal and ſpiritual, are almoſt all borrowed, and uſed in a Sort of figurative Senſe. Whence they are moſt of 'em attended with a great Deal of Ambiguity and Unfixedneſs in their Signification, occaſioning innumerable Doubts, Difficulties and Confuſions in Enquiries and Controverſies about Things of this Nature. But Language is much leſs adapted to expreſs Things in the Mind of the incomprehenſible Deity, preciſely as they are.

We find a great Deal of Difficulty in conceiving exactly of the Nature of our own Souls. And notwithſtanding all the Progreſs which has been made in paſt and preſent Ages, in this Kind of Knowledge, whereby our Metaphyſicks, as it relates to theſe Things, is brought to greater Perfection than once it was; yet here is ſtill Work enough left for future Enquiries and Reſearches, and Room for Progreſs ſtill to be made, for many Ages and Generations. But we had need to be infinitely able Metaphyſicians, to conceive with Clearneſs, according to ſtrict, proper and perfect Truth, concerning the Nature of the divine Eſſence, and the Modes of the Action and Operation of the Powers of the divine Mind.

And it may be noted particularly, that tho' we are obliged to conceive of ſome Things in God as conſequent and dependent on others, and of ſome Things pertaining to the divine Nature and Will as the Foundation of others, and ſo before others in the Order of Nature: As, we muſt conceive of the Knowledge and Holineſs of God as prior in the Order of Nature to his Happineſs; the Perfection of his Underſtanding, as the Foundation of his wiſe Purpoſes and Decrees; the Holineſs of his Nature, as the Cauſe and Reaſon of his holy Determinations. And yet when we ſpeak of Cauſe and Effect, Antecedent and Conſequent, fundamental and dependent, determining and determined, in the firſt Being, who is ſelf-exiſtent, independent, of perfect and abſolute Simplicity and Immutability, and the firſt Cauſe of all Things; doubtleſs there muſt be leſs Propriety in ſuch Repreſentations, than when we

we ſpeak of derived dependent Beings, who are compounded, and liable to perpetual Mutation and Succeſſion.

Having premiſed this, I proceed to obſerve concerning the foremention'd Author's Exclamation, about the *neceſſary Determination of God's Will*, in all Things, by what He ſees to be *fitteſt* and *beſt*.

That all the ſeeming Force of ſuch Objections and Exclamations muſt ariſe from an Imagination, that there is ſome Sort of Privilege or Dignity in being without ſuch a moral Neceſſity, as will make it impoſſible to do any other, than always chuſe what is wiſeſt and beſt; as tho' there were ſome Diſadvantage, Meanneſs and Subjection, in ſuch a Neceſſity; a Thing by which the Will was confined, kept under, and held in Servitude by ſomething, which, as it were, maintained a ſtrong and invincible Power and Dominion over it, by Bonds that held him faſt, and that he could by no Means deliver himſelf from. Whereas, this muſt be all meer Imagination and Deluſion. 'Tis no Diſadvantage or Diſhonour to a Being, neceſſarily to act in the moſt excellent and happy Manner, from the neceſſary Perfection of his own Nature. This argues no Imperfection, Inferiority or Dependance, nor any Want of Dignity, Privilege or Aſcendancy. † 'Tis not inconſiſtent with the

† "It might have been objected with much more Plauſibleneſs, that "the ſupreme Cauſe cannot be free, becauſe he muſt needs do "always what is beſt in the Whole. But this would not at all "ſerve *Spinoza*'s Purpoſe: For this is a Neceſſity, not of Nature "and Fate, but of Fitneſs and Wiſdom; a Neceſſity conſiſtent "with the greateſt Freedom, and moſt perfect Choice. For the "only Foundation of this Neceſſity is ſuch an unalterable Rectitude of Will, and Perfection of Wiſdom, as makes it impoſſible "for a wiſe Being to act fooliſhly." *Clark*'s Dem. of the Being "and Attrib. of God. Edit. 6. P. 64.

"Tho' God is a moſt perfectly free Agent, yet he cannot but do "always what is beſt and wiſeſt in the Whole. The Reaſon is "evident; becauſe perfect Wiſdom and Goodneſs are as ſteady "and certain Principles of Action, as Neceſſity itſelf; and an "infinitely wiſe and good Being, indued with the moſt perfect "Liberty, can no more chuſe to act in Contradiction to Wiſdom "and Goodneſs, than a neceſſary Agent can act contrary to the "Neceſſity by which it is acted; it being as great an Abſurdity and "Impoſſibility in Choice, for infinite Wiſdom to chuſe to act unwiſely, or infinite Goodneſs to chuſe what is not good, as it would "be

the abſolute, and moſt perfect Sovereignty of God. The Sovereignty of God is his Ability and Authority to do whatever pleaſes Him; whereby *He doth according to his Will in the Armies of Heaven, and amongſt the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can ſtay his Hand, or ſay unto him, What doſt thou?*----The following Things belong to the *Sovereignty* of God; *viz.* (1.) Supreme, univerſal, and infinite *Power*; whereby he is able to do what he pleaſes, without Controul, without any Confinement of that Power, without any Subjection in the leaſt Meaſure to any other Power; and ſo without any Hindrance or Reſtraint, that it ſhould be either impoſſible, or at all difficult, for him to accompliſh his Will; and without any

G g Dependance

" be in Nature, for abſolute Neceſſity to fail of producing its ne-
" ceſſary Effect. There was indeed no Neceſſity in Nature, that
" God ſhould at firſt create ſuch Beings as he has created, or in-
" deed any Being at all; becauſe he is in himſelf infinitely happy
" and All-ſufficient. There was alſo no Neceſſity in Nature, that
" he ſhould preſerve and continue Things in Being, after they were
" created; becauſe he would be ſelf-ſufficient without their Conti-
" nuance, as he was before their Creation. But it was fit and wiſe
" and good, that infinite Wiſdom ſhould manifeſt, and infinite Good-
" neſs communicate itſelf; and therefore it was neceſſary, in the
" Senſe of Neceſſity I am now ſpeaking of, that Things ſhould be
" made *at ſuch a Time*, and continued *ſo long*, and indeed with
" various Perfections in ſuch Degrees, as infinite Wiſdom and
" Goodneſs ſaw it wiſeſt and beſt that they ſhould." *Ibid*, P. 112,113.
" 'Tis not a Fault, but a Perfection of our Nature, to deſire, will and
" act, according to the laſt Reſult of a fair Examination.—— This
" is ſo far from being a Reſtraint or Diminution of Freedom, that
" it is the very Improvement and Benefit of it: 'Tis not an Abridg-
" ment, 'tis the End and Uſe of our Liberty; and the further we
" are removed from ſuch a Determination, the nearer we are to
" Miſery and Slavery. A perfect Indifference in the Mind, not
" determinable by its laſt Judgment of the Good or Evil that is
" thought to attend its Choice, would be ſo far from being an Ad-
" vantage and Excellency of any intellectual Nature, that it would
" be as great an Imperfection, as the Want of Indifferency to act, or
" not to act, till determined by the Will, would be an Imperfection
" on the other Side.——— 'Tis as much a Perfection, that Deſire
" or the Power of preferring ſhould be determined by Good, as that
" the Power of acting ſhould be determined by the Will: And the
" certainer ſuch Determination is, the greater the Perfection. Nay,
" were we determined by any Thing but the laſt Reſult of our own
" Minds, judging of the Good or Evil of any Action, we were
" not free. The very End of our Freedom being, that we might

" attain

Dependance of his Power on any other Power, from whence it ſhould be derived, or which it ſhould ſtand in any Need of: So far from this, that all other Power is derived from Him, and is abſolutely dependent on Him. (2.) That He has ſupreme *Authority*; abſolute and moſt perfect Right to do what He wills, without Subjection to any ſuperiour Authority, or any Derivation of Authority from any other, or Limitation by any diſtinct independent Authority, either ſuperiour, equal, or inferiour; he being the Head of all Dominion, and Fountain of all Authority; and alſo without Reſtraint by any Obligation, implying either Subjection, Derivation, or Dependance, or proper Limitation. (3.) That his *Will* is ſupreme, underived, and independent on any Thing without Himſelf; being in

" attain theGood we chuſe; and therefore everyMan is bro't under
" a Neceſſity by his Conſtitution, as an intelligent Being, to be
" determin'd in willing by his own Thought and Judgment, what
" is beſt for him to do; elſe he would be under the Determination
" of ſome other than himſelf, which is Want of Liberty. And to
" deny that a Man's Will, in every Determination, follows his own
" Judgment, is to ſay, that a Man wills and acts for an End that
" he would not have, at the ſame Time that he wills and acts for it.
" For if he prefers it in his preſent Thoughts, before any other,
" 'tis plain he then thinks better of it, and would have it before any
" other; unleſs he can have, and not have it; will, and not will it,
" at the ſame Time; a Contradiction too manifeſt to be admitted.--
" If we look upon thoſe ſuperior Beings above us, who enjoy per-
" fect Happineſs, we ſhall have Reaſon to judge, that they are more
" ſteadily determined in their Choice of Good than we; and yet
" we have no Reaſon to think they are leſs happy, or leſs free, than
" we are. And if it were fit for ſuch poor finite Creatures as we
" are, to pronounce what infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs could do,
" I think we might ſay, that God himſelf cannot chuſe what is not
" Good. *The Freedom of the Almighty hinders not his being determined*
" *by what is beſt.*—— But to give a right View of this miſtaken
" Part of Liberty, let me aſk, Would any one be a Changeling,
" becauſe he is leſs determined by wiſe Determinations, than a wiſe
" Man? Is it worth the Name of Freedom, to be atLiberty to play
" the Fool, and draw Shame and Miſery upon a Man's ſelf? If to
" break looſe from the Conduct of Reaſon, and to want that
" Reſtraint of Examination and Judgment, that keeps us from
" doing or chuſing the worſe, be Liberty, true Liberty, Mad-men
" and Fools are the only free Men. Yet I think no Body would
" chuſe to be mad, for the ſake of ſuch Liberty, but he that is
" mad already. *Locke*, Hum. Und. Vol. I. Edit. 7. P. 215, 216.

" This Being having all Things always neceſſarily in View, muſt al-
" ways,

in every Thing determin'd by his own Counſel, having no other Rule but his own Wiſdom; his Will not being ſubject to, or reſtrain'd by the Will of any other, and others Wills being perfectly ſubject to his. (4.) That his *Wiſdom*, which determines his Will, is ſupreme, perfect, underived, ſelf-ſufficient, and independent; ſo that it may be ſaid as in Iſai. xl. 14. *With whom took He Counſel? And who inſtructed Him and taught Him in the Path of Judgment, and taught Him Knowlege, and ſhewed Him the Way of Underſtanding?*----There is no other divine Sovereignty but this: and this is properly *abſolute Sovereignty:* No other is deſirable; nor would any other be honourable, or happy: and indeed there is no other conceivable or poſſible. 'Tis the Glory and Greatneſs of the divine Sovereignty, that God's Will is determin'd by his own infinite all-ſufficient Wiſdom in every Thing; and in nothing at all is either directed by any inferiour Wiſdom, or by no Wiſdom; whereby it would become ſenſeleſs Arbitrarineſs, determining and acting without Reaſon, Deſign or End.

 If

" ways, and eternally will, according to his infinite Comprehenſion " of Things; that is, muſt will all Things that are wiſeſt and beſt to " be done. There is no getting free of this Conſequence. If it " can will at all, it muſt will this Way. To be capable of know- " ing, and not capable of willing, is not to be underſtood. And " to be capable of willing otherwiſe than what is wiſeſt and beſt, " contradicts that Knowledge which is infinite. Infinite Knowledge " muſt direct the Will without Error *Here then is the Origin of* " *moral Neceſſity; and that is really, of Freedom.* —— Perhaps it " may be ſaid, when the divine Will is determined, from the Con- " ſideration of the eternal Aptitudes of Things, it is as neceſſarily " determined, as if it were phyſically impel'd, if that were poſſible. " But it is Unſkilfulneſs, to ſuppoſe this an Objection. The great " Principle is once eſtabliſhed, *viz.* That the divine Will is deter- " mined by the eternal Reaſon and Aptitudes of Things, inſtead of " being phyſically impelled; and after that, the more ſtrong and " neceſſary this Determination is, the more perfect the Deity muſt " be allowed to be: It is this that makes him an amiable and " adorable Being, whoſe Will and Power are conſtantly, immutably " determined, by the Conſideration of what is wiſeſt and beſt; in- " ſtead of a ſurd Being, with Power, but without Diſcerning and " Reaſon. *It is the Beauty of this Neceſſity, that it is ſtrong as Fate* " *itſelf, with all the Advantage of Reaſon and Goodneſs.*—— It is " ſtrange, to ſee Men contend, that the Deity is not Free, becauſe he " is neceſſarily rational, immutably good and wiſe; when a Man " is allowed ſtill the perfecter Being, the more fixedly and conſtantly " his Will is determined by Reaſon and Truth." *Enquiry into the* " *Nature of the Hum. Soul.* Edit. 3. Vol. II. P. 403, 404.

If God's Will is ſteadily and ſurely determined in every Thing by *ſupreme* Wiſdom, then it is in every Thing neceſſarily determined to that which is *moſt* wiſe. And certainly it would be a Diſadvantage and Indignity, to be otherwiſe. For if the divine Will was not neceſſarily determin'd to that which in every Caſe is wiſeſt and beſt, it muſt be ſubject to ſome Degree of undeſigning Contingence; and ſo in the ſame Degree liable to Evil. To ſuppoſe the divine Will liable to be carried hither and thither at Random, by the uncertain Wind of blind Contingence, which is guided by no Wiſdom, no Motive, no intelligent Dictate whatſoever, (if any ſuch Thing were poſſible) would certainly argue a great Degree of Imperfection and Meanneſs, infinitely unworthy of the Deity.----If it be a Diſadvantage, for the divine Will to be attended with this moral Neceſſity, then the more free from it, and the more left at Random, the greater Dignity and Advantage. And conſequently to be perfectly free from the Direction of Underſtanding, and univerſally and entirely left to ſenſeleſs unmeaning Contingence, to act abſolutely at Random, would be the ſupreme Glory.

It no more argues any Dependence of God's Will, that his ſupremely wiſe Volition is neceſſary, than it argues a Dependence of his Being, that his Exiſtence is neceſſary. If it be ſomething too low, for the ſupreme Being to have his Will determined by moral Neceſſity, ſo as neceſſarily, in every Caſe, to will in the higheſt Degree holily and happily; then why is it not alſo ſomething too low, for him to have his Exiſtence, and the infinite Perfection of his Nature, and his infinite Happineſs determined by Neceſſity? It is no more to God's Diſhonour, to be neceſſarily wiſe, than to be neceſſarily holy. And if neither of them be to his Diſhonour, then it is not to his Diſhonour neceſſarily to act holily and wiſely. And if it be not diſhonourable, to be neceſſarily holy and wiſe, in the higheſt poſſible Degree, no more is it mean or diſhonourable, neceſſarily to act holily and wiſely in the higheſt poſſible Degree; or (which is the ſame Thing) to do that, in every Caſe, which above all other Things is wiſeſt and beſt.

The Reaſon why it is not diſhonourable, to be neceſſarily *moſt* holy, is, becauſe Holineſs in itſelf is an excellent and honourable Thing. For the ſame Reaſon, it is no Diſhonour to be neceſſarily *moſt* wiſe, and in every Caſe to act moſt wiſely, or do the Thing which is the wiſeſt of all; for Wiſdom is alſo in it ſelf excellent and honourable.

The

The forementioned Author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of Will* &c. as has been obſerved, repreſents that Doctrine of the divine Will's being in every Thing neceſſarily determined by ſuperior Fitneſs, as making the bleſſed God a Kind of almighty Miniſter and mechanical Medium of Fate: And he inſiſts, P. 93, 94. that this moral Neceſſity and Impoſſibility is in Effect the ſame Thing with phyſical and natural Neceſſity and Impoſſibility: And in P. 54, 55. he ſays, "The Scheme "which determines the Will always and certainly by the "Underſtanding, and the Underſtanding by the Appearance "of Things, ſeems to take away the true Nature of Vice "and Vertue. For the ſublimeſt of Vertues, and the vileſt "of Vices, ſeem rather to be Matters of Fate and Neceſſity, "flowing naturally and neceſſarily from the Exiſtence, the "Circumſtances, and preſent Situation of Perſons and Things: "For this Exiſtence and Situation neceſſarily makes ſuch an "Appearance to the Mind; from this Appearance flows a "neceſſary Perception and Judgment, concerning theſe Things; "this Judgment neceſſarily determines the Will: And thus "by this Chain of neceſſary Cauſes, Vertue and Vice would "loſe their Nature, and become natural Ideas, and neceſſary "Things, inſtead of moral and free Actions."

And yet this ſame Author allows, P. 30, 31. That a perfectly wiſe Being will conſtantly and certainly chuſe what is moſt fit; and ſays, P. 102, 103. "I grant, and always have "granted, that whereſoever there is ſuch an antecedent ſupe-"rior Fitneſs of Things, God acts according to it, ſo as never "to contradict it; and particularly, in all his judicial Pro-"ceedings, as a Governor, and Diſtributer of Rewards and "Puniſhments." Yea, he ſays expreſly, P. 42. "That it is "not poſſible for God to act otherwiſe, than according to "this Fitneſs and Goodneſs in Things."

So that according to this Author, putting theſe ſeveral Paſſages of his Eſſay together, there is *no Vertue, nor any Thing of a moral Nature*, in the moſt ſublime and glorious Acts and Exerciſes of God's Holineſs, Juſtice, and Faithfulneſs; and He never does any Thing which is in it ſelf ſupreamly worthy, and above all other Things fit and excellent, but only as a Kind of mechanical Medium of Fate; and in *what he does as the Judge, and moral Governor of the World*, He exerciſes no moral Excellency; exerciſing no Freedom in theſe Things, becauſe He acts by moral Neceſſity, which is in Effect the ſame with phyſical or natural

natural Neceſſity; and therefore he only acts by an *Hobbiſtical* Fatality; *as a Being indeed of vaſt Underſtanding, as well as Power and Efficiency* (as He ſaid before) *but without a Will to chuſe, being a Kind of almighty Miniſter of Fate, acting under it's ſupream Influence.* For He allows, that in all theſe Things God's Will is determined conſtantly and certainly by a ſuperiour Fitneſs, and that it is not poſſible for Him to act otherwiſe. And if theſe Things are ſo, what Glory or Praiſe belongs to God for doing holily and juſtly, or taking the moſt fit, holy, wiſe and excellent Courſe, in any one Inſtance? Whereas, according to the Scriptures, and alſo the common Senſe of Mankind, it don't in the leaſt derogate from the Honour of any Being, that through the moral Perfection of his Nature, he neceſſarily acts with ſupream Wiſdom and Holineſs: But on the contrary, his Praiſe is the greater: Herein conſiſts the Height of his Glory.

The ſame Author, P. 56. ſuppoſes, that herein appears the excellent *Character of a wiſe and good Man, that tho' he can chuſe contrary to the Fitneſs of Things, yet he does not; but ſuffers himſelf to be directed by Fitneſs*; and that in this Conduct *He imitates the bleſſed God.* And yet He ſuppoſes 'tis contrariwiſe with the bleſſed God; not that he ſuffers Himſelf to be directed by Fitneſs, when *He can chuſe contrary to the Fitneſs of Things*, but that *he cannot chuſe contrary to the Fitneſs of Things*; as he ſays, P. 42. *---That it is not poſſible for God to act otherwiſe, than, according to this Fitneſs, where there is any Fitneſs or Goodneſs in Things*: Yea, he ſuppoſes, P. 31. That if a Man *were perfectly wiſe and good, he could not do otherwiſe than be conſtantly and certainly determined by the Fitneſs of Things.*

One Thing more I would obſerve, before I conclude this Section; and that is, that if it derogates nothing from the Glory of God, to be neceſſarily determined by ſuperior Fitneſs in ſome Things, then neither does it to be thus determined in all Things; from any Thing in the Nature of ſuch Neceſſity, as at all detracting from God's Freedom, Independence, abſolute Supremacy, or any Dignity or Glory of his Nature, State, or Manner of acting; or as implying any Infirmity, Reſtraint, or Subjection. And if the Thing be ſuch as well conſiſts with God's Glory, and has nothing tending at all to detract from it; then we need not be afraid of aſcribing it to God in too many Things, leſt thereby we ſhould detract from God's Glory too much.

SECTION VIII.

Some further Objections againſt the moral Neceſſity of GOD's Volitions *conſidered.*

THE Author laſt cited, as has been obſerved, owns that God, being perfectly wiſe, will conſtantly and certainly chuſe what appears moſt fit, where there is a ſuperior Fitneſs and Goodneſs in Things; and that it is not poſſible for him to do otherwiſe. So that it is in Effect confeſs'd, that in thoſe Things where there is any real Preferableneſs, 'tis no Diſhonour, nothing in any Reſpect unworthy of God, for him to act from Neceſſity; notwithſtanding all that can be objected from the Agreement of ſuch a Neceſſity, with the Fate of the *Stoicks*, and the Neceſſity maintain'd by Mr. *Hobbes*. From which it will follow, that if it were ſo, that in all the different Things, among which God chuſes, there were evermore a ſuperior Fitneſs or Preferableneſs on one Side, then it would be no Diſhonour, or any Thing, in any Reſpect, unworthy, or unbecoming of God, for his Will to be neceſſarily determined in every Thing. And if this be allowed, it is a giving up entirely the Argument, from the Unſuitableneſs of ſuch a Neceſſity to the Liberty, Supremacy, Independence and Glory of the divine Being; and a reſting the whole Weight of the Affair on the Deciſion of another Point wholly diverſe; *viz. Whether it be ſo indeed*, that in all the various poſſible Things which are in God's View, and may be conſidered as capable Objects of his Choice, there is not evermore a Preferableneſs in one Thing above another. This is denied by this Author; who ſuppoſes, that in many Inſtances, between two or more poſſible Things, which come within the View of the divine Mind, there is a perfect Indifference and Equality as to Fitneſs, or Tendency to attain any good End which God can have in View, or to anſwer any of his Deſigns. Now therefore I would conſider whether this be evident.

The Arguments brought to prove this, are of two Kinds. (1.) It is urged, that in many Inſtances we muſt ſuppoſe there is abſolutely no Difference between various poſſible Objects of Choice, which God has in View: And (2.) that the Difference

Difference between many Things is so inconsiderable, or of such a Nature, that it would be unreasonable to suppose it to be of any Consequence; or to suppose that any of God's wise Designs would not be answered in one Way as well as the other.

Therefore,

I. The first Thing to be considered is, Whether there are any Instances wherein there is a perfect Likeness, and absolutely no Difference, between different Objects of Choice, that are proposed to the divine Understanding?

And here in the *first* Place, it may be worthy to be considered, whether the Contradiction there is in the *Terms* of the Question proposed, don't give Reason to suspect that there is an Inconsistence in the *Thing* supposed. 'Tis inquired, whether *different* Objects of Choice mayn't be absolutely *without Difference?* If they are absolutely *without Difference*, then how are they *different* Objects of Choice? If there be absolutely *no Difference* in any Respect, then there is *no Variety* or *Distinction:* For Distinction is only by some Difference. And if there be no *Variety* among proposed *Objects of Choice*, then there is no Opportunity for *Variety of Choice*, or Difference of Determination. For that Determination of a Thing which is not different in any Respect, is not a different Determination, but the same. That this is no Quibble, may appear more fully anon.

The Arguments, to prove that the most High, in some Instances, chuses to do one Thing rather than another, where the Things themselves are perfectly without Difference, are two.

1. That the various Parts of infinite Time and Space, absolutely considered, are perfectly alike, and don't differ at all one from another: And that therefore, when God determined to create the World in such a Part of infinite Duration and Space, rather than others, he determin'd and prefer'd among various Objects, between which there was no Preferableness, and absolutely no Difference.

Answ. This Objection supposes an infinite Length of Time before the World was created, distinguished by successive Parts, properly and truly so; or a Succession of limited and unmeasurable Periods of Time, following one another, in an infinitely long Series: which must needs be a groundless Imagination. The eternal Duration which was before the World, being only the Eternity of God's Existence; which is nothing else

else but his immediate, perfect and invariable Possession of the whole of his unlimited Life, together and at once; *Vitæ interminabilis, tota, simul & perfecta Possessio.* Which is so generally allowed, that I need not stand to demonstrate it. *

So this Objection supposes an Extent of Space beyond the Limits of the Creation, of an infinite Length, Breadth and Depth, truly and properly distinguished into different measurable Parts, limited at certain Stages, one beyond another, in an infinite Series. Which Notion of absolute and infinite Space is doubtless as unreasonable, as that now mention'd, of abso-

* "If all created Beings were taken away, all Possibility of any Mutation or Succession of one Thing to another would appear to be also removed. Abstract Succession in Eternity is scarce to be understood. What is it that succeeds? One Minute to another perhaps, *velut unda supervenit undam.* But when we imagine this, we fancy that the Minutes are Things separately existing. This is the common Notion; and yet it is a manifest Prejudice. Time is nothing but the Existence of created successive Beings, and Eternity the necessary Existence of the Deity. Therefore, if this necessary Being hath no Change or Succession in his Nature, his Existence must of Course be unsuccessive. We seem to commit a double Oversight in this Case; *first*, we find Succession in the necessary Nature and Existence of the Deity himself: Which is wrong, if the Reasoning above be conclusive. And *then* we ascribe this Succession to Eternity, considered abstractedly from the eternal Being; and suppose it, one knows not what, a Thing subsisting by it self, and flowing, one Minute after another. This is the Work of pure Imagination, and contrary to the Reality of Things. Hence the common metaphorical Expressions; *Time runs a-pace, let us lay hold on the present Minute,* and the like. The Philosophers themselves mislead us by their Illustrations: They compare Eternity to the Motion of a Point running on forever, and making a traceless infinite Line. Here the Point is supposed a Thing actually subsisting, representing the present Minute; and then they ascribe Motion or Succession to it: that is, they ascribe Motion to a meer Non-entity, to illustrate to us a successive Eternity made up of finite successive Parts.——If once we allow an all-perfect Mind, which hath an eternal, immutable and infinite Comprehension of all Things, always (and allow it we must) the Distinction of past and future vanishes with Respect to such a Mind.———In a Word, if we proceed Step by Step, as above, the Eternity or Existence of the Deity will appear to be *Vitæ interminabilis, tota, simul & perfecta Possessio*; how much soever this may have been a Paradox hitherto." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul.* Vol. 2. P. 409, 410, 411. Edit. 3.

lute and infinite Duration. 'Tis as improper, to imagine that the Immenſity and Omnipreſence of God is diſtinguiſhed by a Series of Miles and Leagues, one beyond another; as that the infinite Duration of God is diſtinguiſhed by Months and Years, one after another. A Diverſity and Order of diſtinct Parts, limited by certain Periods, is as conceivable, and does as naturally obtrude itſelf on our Imagination, in one Caſe as the other; and there is equal Reaſon in each Caſe, to ſuppoſe that our Imagination deceives us. 'Tis equally improper, to talk of Months and Years of the divine Exiſtence, and Mile-ſquares of Deity: And we equally deceive our ſelves, when we talk of the World's being differently fix'd with Reſpect to either of theſe Sorts of Meaſures. I think, we know not what we mean, if we ſay, the World might have been differently placed from what it is, in the broad Expanſe of Infinity; or, that it might have been differently fix'd in the long Line of Eternity: And all Arguments and Objections which are built on the Imaginations we are apt to have of infinite Extenſion or Duration, are Buildings founded on Shadows, or Caſtles in the Air.

2. The ſecond Argument, to prove that the moſt High wills one Thing rather than another, without any ſuperior Fitneſs or Preferableneſs in the Thing prefer'd, is God's actually placing in different Parts of the World, Particles or Atoms of Matter that are perfectly equal and alike. The forementioned Author ſays, P. 78, *&c.* "If one would deſcend to the minute ſpecific "Particles, of which different Bodies are compoſed, we ſhould "ſee abundant Reaſon to believe that there are Thouſands of "ſuch little Particles or Atoms of Matter, which are perfectly "equal and alike, and could give no diſtinct Determination to "the Will of God, where to place them." He there inſtances in Particles of Water, of which there are ſuch immenſe Numbers, which compoſe the Rivers and Oceans of this World; and the infinite Myriads of the luminous and fiery Particles, which compoſe the Body of the Sun; ſo many, that it would be very unreaſonable to ſuppoſe no two of them ſhould be exactly equal and alike.

Anſw. (1.) To this I anſwer: That as we muſt ſuppoſe Matter to be infinitely diviſible, 'tis very unlikely that any two of all theſe Particles are exactly equal and alike; ſo unlikely, that it is a Thouſand to one, yea, an infinite Number to one, but it is otherwiſe: And that altho' we ſhould allow a great Similarity

Similarity between the different Particles of Water and Fire, as to their general Nature and Figure; and however ſmall we ſuppoſe thoſeParticles to be, 'tis infinitely unlikely, that any two of them ſhould be exactly equal in Dimenſions and Quantity of Matter.---- If we ſhould ſuppoſe a great many Globes of the ſame Nature with the Globe of the Earth, it would be very ſtrange, if there were any two of them that had exactly the ſame Number of Particles of Duſt and Water in them. But infinitely leſs ſtrange, than that two Particles of Light ſhould have juſt the ſame Quantity of Matter. For a Particle of Light (according to the Doctrine of the infinite Diviſibility of Matter) is compoſed of infinitely more aſſignable Parts, than there are Particles of Duſt and Water in the Globe of the Earth. And as it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of theſe Particles ſhould be *equal*; ſo it is, that they ſhould be *alike* in other Reſpects: To inſtance in the Configuration of their Surfaces. If there were very many Globes, of the Nature of the Earth, it would be very unlikely that any two ſhould have exactly the ſame Number of Particles of Duſt, Water andStone, in their Surfaces, and all poſited exactly alike, one with Reſpect to another, without any Difference, in any Part diſcernable either by the naked Eye or Microſcope; but infinitely leſs ſtrange, than that two Particles of Light ſhould be perfectly of the ſame Figure. For there are infinitely more aſſignable real Parts on the Surface of a Particle of Light, than there are Particles of Duſt, Water and Stone, on the Surface of the terreſtrial Globe.

Anſ. (2.) But then, ſuppoſing that there are two Particles or Atoms of Matter perfectly equal and alike, which God has placed in different Parts of the Creation; as I will not deny it to be poſſible for God to make two Bodies perfectly alike, and put them in different Places; yet it will not follow, that two different or diſtinct Acts or Effects of the divine Power have exactly the ſame Fitneſs for the ſame Ends. For theſe two different Bodies are not different or diſtinct, in any other Reſpects than thoſe wherein they *differ*: They are two in no other Reſpects than thoſe wherein there is a Difference. If they are perfectly equal and alike *in themſelves*, then they can be diſtinguiſhed, or be diſtinct, only in thoſe Things which are called *Circumſtances*; as, Place, Time, Reſt, Motion, or ſome other preſent or paſt Circumſtances or Relations. For 'tis Difference only, that conſtitutes Diſtinction. If God makes two Bodies *in themſelves* everyWay equal and alike, and agreeing

perfectly in all other Circumstances and Relations, but only *their Place*; then in this only is there any Distinction or Duplicity. The Figure is the same, the Measure is the same, the Solidity and Resistance are the same, and every Thing the same, but only the Place. Therefore what the Will of God determines, is this, namely, that there should be the same Figure, the same Extension, the same Resistance, *&c.* in two different Places. And for this Determination he has some Reason. There is some End, for which such a Determination and Act has a peculiar Fitness, above all other Acts. Here is no one Thing determined without an End, and no one Thing without a Fitness for that End, superior to any Thing else. If it be the Pleasure of God to cause the same Resistance, and the same Figure, to be in two different Places and Situations, we can no more justly argue from it, that here must be some Determination or Act of God's Will, that is wholly without Motive or End, then we can argue that whenever, in any Case, it is a Man's Will to speak the same Words, or make the same Sounds at two different Times; there must be some Determination or Act of his Will, without any Motive or End. The Difference of Place, in the former Case, proves no more than the Difference of Time does in the other. If any one should say with Regard to the former Case, that there must be something determined without an End; *viz.* That of those two similar Bodies, this in particular should be made in this Place, and the other in the other, and should enquire why the Creator did not make them in a Transposition, when both are alike, and each would equally have suited either Place? The Enquiry supposes something that is not true; namely, that the two Bodies differ and are distinct in other Respects besides their Place. So that with this Distinction, *inherent* in them, they might in their first Creation have been transposed, and each might have begun it's Existence in the Place of the other.

Let us for Clearness sake suppose, that God had at the Beginning made two Globes, each of an Inch Diameter, both perfect Spheres, and perfectly solid without Pores, and perfectly alike in every Respect, and placed them near one to another, one towards the right Hand, and the other towards the left, without any Difference as to Time, Motion or Rest, past or present, or any Circumstance, but only their Place; and the Question should be ask'd, Why God in their Creation placed 'em so? Why that which is made on the right Hand, was not made on the left, and *vice versa?* Let it be well considered,

sidered, whether there be any Sense in such a Question; and whether the Enquiry don't suppose something false and absurd. Let it be considered, what the Creator must have done otherwise than he did, what different Act of Will or Power he must have exerted, in order to the Thing proposed. All that could have been done, would have been to have made two Spheres, perfectly alike, in the same Places where he has made them, without any Difference of the Things made, either in themselves, or in any Circumstance; so that the whole Effect would have been without any Difference, and therefore just the same. By the Supposition, the two Spheres are different in no other Respect but their Place; and therefore in other Respects they are the same. Each has the same Roundness: it is not a distinct Rotundity, in any other Respect but it's Situation. There are also the same Dimensions, differing in nothing but their Place. And so of their Resistance, and every Thing else that belongs to them.

Here if any chuses to say, "that there is a Difference in another Respect, *viz.* That they are not NUMERICALLY the same: That it is thus with all the Qualities that belong to them: That it is confessed they are in some Respects the same; that is, they are both exactly alike; but yet *numerically* they differ. Thus the Roundness of one is not the same *numerical*, *individual* Roundness with that of the other." Let this be supposed; then the Question about the Determination of the divine Will in the Affair, is, Why did God will, that this *individual* Roundness should be at the right Hand, and the other *individual* Roundness at the left? Why did not he make them in a contrary Position? Let any rational Person consider, whether such Questions be not Words without a Meaning; as much as if God should see fit for some Ends to cause the same Sounds to be repeated, or made at two different Times; the Sounds being perfectly the same in every other Respect, but only one was a Minute after the other; and it should be ask'd upon it, why God caused these Sounds, numerically different, to succeed one the other in such a Manner? why he did not make that individual Sound which was in the first Minute, to be in the second? and the individual Sound of the last Minute to be in the first? Which Enquiries would be even ridiculous; as I think every Person must see at once, in the Case proposed of two Sounds, being only the same repeated, absolutely without any Difference, but that one Circumstance of Time. If the most High sees it will answer some good

good End, that the ſame Sound ſhould be made by Lightning at two diſtinct Times, and therefore wills that it ſhould be ſo, muſt it needs therefore be, that herein there is ſome Act of God's Will without any Motive or End? God ſaw fit often, at diſtinct Times, and on different Occaſions, to ſay the very ſame Words to *Moſes*; namely thoſe, *I am Jehovah*. And would it not be unreaſonable, to infer as a certain Conſequence from this, that here muſt be ſome Act or Acts of the divine Will, in determining and diſpoſing theſe Words exactly alike at different Times, wholly without Aim or Inducement? But it would be no more unreaſonable than to ſay, that there muſt be an Act of God's without any Inducement, if he ſees it beſt, and for ſome Reaſons, determines that there ſhall be the ſame Reſiſtence, the ſame Dimenſions, and the ſame Figure, in ſeveral diſtinct Places.

If in the Inſtance of the two Spheres, perfectly alike, it be ſuppoſed poſſible that God might have made them in a contrary Poſition; that which is made at the right Hand, being made at the Left; then I aſk, Whether it is not evidently equally poſſible, if God had made but one of them, and that in the Place of the right-hand Globe, that he might have made that numerically different from what it is, and numerically different from what he did make it; tho' perfectly alike, and in the ſame Place; and at the ſame Time, and in every Reſpect, in the ſame Circumſtances and Relations?, Namely, Whether he might not have made it numerically the ſame with that which he has now made at the left Hand; and ſo have left that which is now created at the right Hand, in a State of Non-Exiſtence? And if ſo, whether it would not have been poſſible to have made one in that Place, perfectly like theſe, and yet numerically differing from both? And let it be conſidered, whether from this Notion of a numerical Difference in Bodies, perfectly equal and alike, which numerical Difference is ſomething inherent in the Bodies themſelves, and diverſe from the Difference of Place or Time, or any Circumſtance whatſoever; it will not follow, that there is an infinite Number of numerically different poſſible Bodies, perfectly alike, among which God chuſes, by a ſelf-determining Power, when he goes about to create Bodies.

Therefore let us put the Caſe thus: Suppoſing that God in the Beginning had created but one perfectly ſolid Sphere, in a certain Place; and it ſhould be enquired, Why God created that individual

individual Sphere, in that Place, at that Time? And why he did not create another Sphere perfectly like it, but numerically different, in the same Place, at the same Time? Or why he chose to bring into Being there, that very Body, rather than any of the infinite Number of other Bodies, perfectly like it; either of which he could have made there as well, and would have answered his End as well? Why he caused to exist, at that Place and Time, that individual Roundness, rather than any other of the infinite Number of individual Rotundities, just like it? Why that individual Resistance, rather than any other of the infinite Number of possible Resistances just like it? And it might as reasonably be asked, Why, when God first caused it to Thunder, he caused that individual Sound then to be made, and not another just like it? Why did he make Choice of this very Sound, and reject all the infinite Number of other possible Sounds just like it, but numerically differing from it, and all differing one from another? I think, every Body must be sensible of the Absurdity and Nonsense of what is supposed in such Inquiries. And if we calmly attend to the Matter, we shall be convinced, that all such Kind of Objections as I am answering, are founded on nothing but the Imperfection of our Manner of conceiving of Things, and the Obscureness of Language, and great Want of Clearness and Precision in the Signification of Terms.

If any shall find Fault with this Reasoning, that it is going a great Length into metaphysical Niceties and Subtilties; I answer, The Objection which they are in Reply to, is a metaphysical Subtilty, and must be treated according to the Nature of it. *

II. Another Thing alledged is, That innumerable Things which are determined by the divine Will, and chosen and done by God rather than others, differ from those that are not chosen in so inconsiderable a Manner, that it would be unreasonable to suppose the Difference to be of any Consequence, or that there is any superiour Fitness or Goodness, that God can have Respect to in the Determination.

To

* "For Men to have Recourse to Subtilties, in raising Difficulties, "and then complain, that they should be taken off by minutely "examining these Subtilties, is a strange Kind of Procedure." *Nature of the Hum. Soul.* V. 2. P. 331.

To which I anſwer; it is impoſſible for us to determine with any Certainty or Evidence, that becauſe the Difference is very ſmall, and appears to us of no Conſideration, therefore there is abſolutely no ſuperiour Goodneſs, and no valuable End which can be propoſed by the Creator and Governor of the World, in ordering ſuch a Difference. The forementioned Author mentions many Inſtances. One is, there being one Atom in the whole Univerſe more, or leſs. But I think it would be unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that God made one Atom in vain, or without any End or Motive. He made not one Atom but what was a Work of his almighty Power, as much as the whole Globe of the Earth, and requires as much of a conſtant Exertion of almighty Power to uphold it; and was made and is upheld underſtandingly, and on Deſign, as much as if no other had been made but that. And it would be as unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that he made it without any Thing really aimed at in ſo doing, as much as to ſuppoſe that he made the Planet *Jupiter* without Aim or Deſign.

'Tis poſſible, that the moſt minute Effects of the Creator's Power, the ſmalleſt aſſignable Differences between the Things which God has made, may be attended, in the whole Series of Events, and the whole Compaſs and Extent of their Influence, with very great and important Conſequences. If the Laws of Motion & Gravitation, laid down by Sir *Iſaac Newton*, hold univerſally, there is not one Atom, nor the leaſt aſſignable Part of an Atom, but what has Influence, every Moment, throughout the whole material Univerſe, to cauſe every Part to be otherwiſe than it would be, if it were not for that particular corporeal Exiſtence. And however the Effect is inſenſible for the preſent, yet it may in Length of Time become great and important.

To illuſtrate this, Let us ſuppoſe two Bodies moving the ſame Way, in ſtrait Lines, perfectly parallel one to another; but to be diverted from this Parallel Courſe, and drawn one from another, as much as might be by the Attraction of an Atom, at the Diſtance of one of the furtheſt of the fix'd Stars from the Earth; theſe Bodies being turned out of the Lines of their parallel Motion, will, by Degrees, get further and further diſtant, one from the other; and tho' the Diſtance may be imperceptible for a long Time, yet at Length it may become very great. So the Revolution of a Planet round the Sun being retarded or accelerated, and the Orbit of it's Revolution made

made greater or leſs, and more or leſs elliptical, and ſo it's Periodical Time longer or ſhorter, no more than may be by the Influence of the leaſt Atom, might in Length of Time perform a whole Revolution ſooner or later than otherwiſe it would have done ; which might make a vaſt Alteration with Regard to Millions of important Events. So the Influence of the leaſt Particle may, for ought we know, have ſuch Effect on ſomething in the Conſtitution of ſome human Body, as to cauſe another Thought to ariſe in the Mind at a certain Time, than otherwiſe would have been ; which in Length of Time (yea, and that not very great) might occaſion a vaſt Alteration thro' the whole World of Mankind. And ſo innumerable other Ways might be mention'd, wherein the leaſt aſſignable Alteration may poſſibly be attended with great Conſequences.

Another *Argument*, which the forementioned Author brings againſt a neceſſary Determination of the divine Will by a ſuperiour Fitneſs, is, that ſuch Doctrine derogates from the *Freeneſs* of God's *Grace* and *Goodneſs*, in chuſing the Objects of his Favour and Bounty, and from the *Obligation* upon Men to *Thankfulneſs* for ſpecial Benefits. P. 89, *&c.*

In anſwer to this Objection, I would obſerve,

1. That it derogates no more from the Goodneſs of God, to ſuppoſe the Exerciſe of the Benevolence of his Nature to be determin'd by Wiſdom, than to ſuppoſe it determined by Chance, and that his Favours are beſtowed altogether at Random, his Will being determin'd by nothing but perfect Accident, without any End or Deſign whatſoever ; which muſt be the Caſe, as has been demonſtrated, if Volition be not determined by a prevailing Motive. That which is owing to perfect Contingence, wherein neither previous Inducement, nor antecedent Choice has any Hand, is not owing more to Goodneſs or Benevolence, than that which is owing to the Influence of a wiſe End.

2. 'Tis acknowleged, that if the Motive that determines the Will of God, in the Choice of the Objects of his Favours, be any moral Quality in the Object, recommending that Object to his Benevolence above others, his chuſing that Object is not ſo great a Manifeſtation of the Freeneſs and Sovereignty of his Grace, as if it were otherwiſe. But there is no Neceſſity of ſuppoſing this, in order to our ſuppoſing that he has ſome

wiſe End in View, in determining to beſtow his Favours on one Perſon rather than another. We are to diſtinguiſh between the *Merit of the Object of God's Favour*, or a moral Qualification of *the Object* attracting that Favour and recommending to it, and the *natural Fitneſs* of ſuch a Determination *of the Act of God's Goodneſs*, to anſwer ſome wiſe Deſign of his own, ſome End in the View of God's Omniſcience.---- 'Tis God's own Act, that is the proper and immediate Object of his Volition.

3. I ſuppoſe that none will deny, but that in ſome Inſtances, God acts from wiſe Deſign in determining the particular Subjects of his Favours: None will ſay, I preſume, that when God diſtinguiſhes by his Bounty particular Societies or Perſons, He never, in any Inſtance, exerciſes any Wiſdom in ſo doing, aiming at ſome happy Conſequence. And if it be not denied to be ſo in ſome Inſtances, then I would enquire, whether in theſe Inſtances God's Goodneſs is leſs manifeſted, than in thoſe wherein God has no Aim or End at all? And whether the Subjects have leſs Cauſe of Thankfulneſs? And if ſo, who ſhall be thankful for the Beſtowment of diſtinguiſhing Mercy, with that enhancing Circumſtance of the Diſtinction's being made without an End? How ſhall it be known when God is influenced by ſome wiſe Aim, and when not? It is very manifeſt with Reſpect to the Apoſtle *Paul*, that God had wiſe Ends in chuſing Him to be a Chriſtian and an Apoſtle, who had been a Perſecutor, &c. The Apoſtle himſelf mentions one End. 1 *Tim.* i. 15, 16. *Chriſt Jeſus came into the World to ſave Sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this Cauſe I obtained Mercy, that in me firſt, Jeſus Chriſt might ſhew forth all Long-ſuffering, for a Pattern to them who ſhould hereafter believe on Him to Life everlaſting.* But yet the Apoſtle never look'd on it as a Diminution of the Freedom and Riches of divine Grace in his Election, which He ſo often and ſo greatly magnifies. This brings me to obſerve,

4. Our ſuppoſing ſuch a moral Neceſſity in the Acts of God's Will as has been ſpoken of, is ſo far from neceſſarily derogating from the Riches of God's Grace to ſuch as are the choſen Objects of his Favour, that in many Inſtances, this moral Neceſſity may ariſe from Goodneſs, and from the great Degree of it. God may chuſe this Object rather than another, as having a ſuperiour Fitneſs to anſwer the Ends, Deſigns and Inclinations of his Goodneſs; being more ſinful, and ſo more miſe-

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rable and neceſſitous than others ; the Inclinations of infinite Mercy and Benevolence may be more gratified, and the gracious Deſign of God's ſending his Son into the World may be more abundantly anſwered, in the Exerciſes of Mercy towards ſuch an Object, rather than another.

One Thing more I would obſerve, before I finiſh what I have to ſay on the Head of the Neceſſity of the Acts of God's Will ; and that is, that ſomething much more like a ſervile Subjection of the divine Being to fatal Neceſſity, will follow from *Arminian* Principles, than from the Doctrines which they oppoſe. . For they (at leaſt moſt of them) ſuppoſe, with Reſpect to all Events that happen in the moral World depending on the Volitions of moral Agents, which are the moſt important Events of the Univerſe, to which all others are ſubordinate ; I ſay, they ſuppoſe with reſpect to theſe, that God has a certain Foreknowledge of them, antecedent to any Purpoſes or Decrees of his about them. And if ſo, they have a fix'd certain Futurity, prior to any Deſigns or Volitions of his, and independent on them, and to which his Volitions muſt be ſubject, as He would wiſely accommodate his Affairs to this fix'd Futurity of the State of Things in the moral World. So that here, inſtead of a moral Neceſſity of God's Will, ariſing from or conſiſting in the infinite Perfection and Bleſſedneſs of the divine Being, we have a fix'd unalterable State of Things, properly diſtinct from the perfect Nature of the divine Mind, and the State of the divine Will and Deſign, and entirely independent on theſe Things, and which they have no Hand in, becauſe they are prior to them ; and which God's Will is truly ſubject to, being obliged to conform or accommodate himſelf to it, in all his Purpoſes and Decrees, and in every Thing He does in his Diſpoſals and Government of the World ; the moral World being the End of the natural ; ſo that all is in vain, that is not accommodated to that State of the moral World, which conſiſts in, or depends upon the Acts and State of the Wills of moral Agents, which had a fix'd Futurition from Eternity. Such a Subjection to Neceſſity as this, would truly argue an Inferiority and Servitude, that would be unworthy of the ſupreme Being ; and is much more agreable to the Notion which many of the Heathen had of Fate, as above the Gods, than that moral Neceſſity of Fitneſs and Wiſdom which has been ſpoken of ; and is truly repugnant to the abſolute Sovereignty of God, and inconſiſtent with the Supremacy of his Will ; and really ſubjects the Will of the moſt High to the Will of his Creatures, and brings him into Dependence upon them.

Section IX.

Concerning that Objection againſt the Doctrine which has been maintain'd, that it makes God *the* Author of Sin.

'TIS urged by *Arminians*, that the Doctrine of the Neceſſity of Men's Volitions, or their neceſſary Connection with antecedent Events and Circumſtances, makes the firſt Cauſe, and ſupreme Orderer of all Things, the Author of Sin; in that he has ſo conſtituted the State and Courſe of Things, that ſinful Volitions become neceſſary, in Conſequence of his Diſpoſal. Dr. *Whitby*, in his Diſcourſe on the Freedom of the Will, * cites one of the Antients, as on his Side, declaring that this Opinion of the Neceſſity of the Will "abſolves Sinners, as "doing nothing of their own Accord which was Evil, and would "caſt all the Blame of all the Wickedneſs committed in the "World, upon God, and upon his Providence, if that were "admitted by the Aſſertors of this Fate; whether he himſelf "did neceſſitate them to do theſe Things, or ordered Matters "ſo that they ſhould be conſtrain'd to do them by ſome other "Cauſe." And the Doctor ſays in another Place, ‡ "In the "Nature of the Thing, and in the Opinion of Philoſophers, "*Cauſa deficiens, in rebus neceſſariis, ad Cauſam per ſe efficientem reducenda eſt.* In Things neceſſary, the deficient Cauſe muſt be "reduced to the efficient. And in this Caſe the Reaſon is "evident; becauſe the not doing what is required, or not "avoiding what is forbidden, being a Defect, muſt follow from "the Poſition of the neceſſary Cauſe of that Deficiency."

Concerning this, I would obſerve the following Things.

I. If there be any Difficulty in this Matter, 'tis nothing peculiar to this Scheme; 'tis no Difficulty or Diſadvantage wherein it is diſtinguiſhed from the Scheme of *Arminians*; and therefore not reaſonably objected by them.

Dr. *Whitby* ſuppoſes, that if Sin neceſſarily follows from God's withholding Aſſiſtance, or if that Aſſiſtance be not given which

* On the five Points. P. 361. ‡ *Ibid* P. 486.

which is absolutely necessary to the avoiding of Evil; then in the Nature of the Thing, God must be as properly the Author of that Evil, as if he were the efficient Cause of it. From whence, according to what he himself says of the Devils and damned Spirits, God must be the proper Author of their perfect unrestrained Wickedness: He must be the efficient Cause of the great Pride of the Devils, and of their perfect Malignity against God, Christ, his Saints, and all that is Good, and of the insatiable Cruelty of their Disposition. For he allows, that God has so forsaken them, and does so withhold his Assistance from them, that they are incapacitated from doing Good, and determined only to Evil. ‡ Our Doctrine, in its Consequence, makes God the Author of Men's Sin in this World, no more, and in no other Sense, than his Doctrine, in its Consequence, makes God the Author of the hellish Pride and Malice of the Devils. And doubtless the latter is as odious an Effect as the former.

Again, if it will *follow at all*, that God is the Author of Sin, from what has been supposed of a sure and infallible Connection between Antecedents and Consequents, it will *follow because of this, viz.* That for God to be the Author or Orderer of those Things which he knows before-hand, will infallibly be attended with such a Consequence, is the same Thing in Effect, as for him to be the Author of that Consequence. But if this be so, this is a Difficulty which equally attends the Doctrine of *Arminians* themselves; at least, of those of them who allow God's certain Forē-knowledge of all Events. For on the Supposition of such a Fore-knowledge, this is the Case with Respect to every Sin that is committed: God knew, that if he ordered and brought to pass such and such Events, such Sins would infallibly follow. As for Instance, God certainly fore-knew, long before *Judas* was born, that if he ordered Things so, that there should be such a Man born, at such a Time, and at such a Place, and that his Life should be preserved, and that he should, in divine Providence, be led into Acquaintance with Jesus; and that his Heart should be so influenced by God's Spirit or Providence, as to be inclined to be a Follower of Christ; and that he should be One of those Twelve, which should be chosen constantly to attend him as his Family; and that his Health should be preserved so that he should go up to *Jerusalem*, at the last Passover in Christ's Life; and it should be so ordered that *Judas* should see Christ's kind Treatment of the

‡ *Ibid* P. 302. 305.

the Woman which anointed him at *Bethany*, and have that Reproof from Chriſt, which he had at that Time, and ſee and hear other Things, which excited his Enmity againſt his Maſter, and other Circumſtances ſhould be ordered, as they were ordered; it would be what would moſt certainly and infallibly follow, that *Judas* would betray his Lord, and would ſoon after hang himſelf, and die impenitent, and be ſent to Hell, for his horrid Wickedneſs.

Therefore this ſuppoſed Difficulty ought not to be brought as an Objection againſt theScheme which has been maintain'd, as *diſagreeing* with the *Arminian* Scheme, ſeeing 'tis no Difficulty owing to ſuch a *Diſagreement*; but aDifficulty wherein the *Arminians* ſhare with us. That muſt be unreaſonably made an Objection againſt our differing from them, which we ſhould not eſcape or avoid at all by agreeing with them.

And therefore I would obſerve,

II. They who object, that this Doctrine makes God the Author of Sin, ought diſtinctly to explain what they mean by that Phraſe, *The Author of Sin*. I know, the Phraſe, as it is commonly uſed, ſignifies ſomething very Ill. If by *the Author of Sin*, be meant *the Sinner*, *the Agent*, or *Actor of Sin*, or *the Doer of a wicked Thing*; ſo it would be a Reproach and Blaſphemy, to ſuppoſe God to be the Author of Sin. In this Senſe, I utterly deny God to be the Author of Sin; rejecting ſuch an Imputation on the moſt High, as what is infinitely to be abhor'd; and deny any ſuch Thing to be the Conſequence of what I have laid down. But if by *the Author of Sin*, is meant the Permitter, or not a Hinderer of Sin; and at the ſame Time, a Diſpoſer of the State of Events, in ſuch a Manner, for wiſe, holy and moſt excellent Ends and Purpoſes, that Sin, if it be permitted or not hindered, will moſt certainly and infallibly follow: I ſay, if this be all that is meant, by being the Author of Sin, I don't deny that God is the Author of Sin, (tho' I diſlike and reject the Phraſe, as that which by Uſe and Cuſtom is apt to carry another Senſe) it is no Reproach for the moſt High to be thus the Author of Sin. This is not to be the *Actor of Sin*, but on the contrary, *of Holineſs*. What God doth herein, is holy; and a glorious Exerciſe of the infinite Excellency of his Nature. And I don't deny, that God's being thus the Author of Sin, follows from what I have laid down; and I aſſert, that it equally follows from the Doctrine which is maintained by moſt of the *Arminian* Divines.

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That it is moſt certainly ſo, that God is in ſuch a Manner the Diſpoſer and Orderer of Sin, is evident, if any Credit is to be given to the Scripture; as well as becauſe it is impoſſible in the Nature of Things to be otherwiſe. In ſuch a Manner God ordered the Obſtinacy of *Pharaoh*, in his refuſing to obey God's Commands, to let the People go. Exod. iv. 21. *I will harden his Heart, and he ſhall not let the People go.* Chap. vii. 2----5. Aaron *thy Brother ſhall ſpeak unto* Pharaoh, *that he ſend the Children of* Iſrael *out of his Land. And I will harden* Pharaoh's *Heart, and multiply my Signs and my Wonders in the Land of* Egypt. *But* Pharaoh *ſhall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine Hand upon* Egypt, *by great Judgments*, &c. Chap. ix. 12. *And the Lord harden'd the Heart of* Pharaoh, *and he hearken'd not unto them, as the Lord had ſpoken unto* Moſes. Chap. x. 1, 2. *And the Lord ſaid unto* Moſes, *Go in unto* Pharaoh; *for I have harden'd his Heart, and the Heart of his Servants, that I might ſhew theſe my Signs before Him, and that thou mayſt tell it in the Ears of thy Son, and thy Son's Son, what Things I have wrought in* Egypt, *and my Signs which I have done amongſt them, that ye may know that I am the Lord.* Chap. xiv. 4. *And I will harden* Pharaoh's *Heart, that he ſhall follow after them: and I will be honoured upon* Pharaoh, *and upon all his Hoſt.* V. 8. *And the Lord harden'd the Heart of* Pharaoh *King of* Egypt, *and he purſued after the Children of* Iſrael. And it is certain that in ſuch a Manner, God for wiſe and good Ends, ordered that Event, *Joſeph*'s being ſold into *Egypt* by his Brethren. Gen. xlv. 5. *Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourſelves, that ye ſold me hither; for God did ſend me before you to preſerve Life.* Ver. 7, 8. *God did ſend me before you to preſerve a Poſterity in the Earth, and to ſave your Lives by a great Deliverance: ſo that now it was not you, that ſent me hither, but God.* Pſal. cvii. 17. *He ſent a Man before them, even* Joſeph, *who was ſold for a Servant.* 'Tis certain, that thus God ordered the Sin and Folly of *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, in refuſing to let the People of *Iſrael* paſs by him peaceably. Deut. ii. 30. *But* Sihon *King of* Heſhbon *would not let us paſs by him; for the Lord thy God harden'd his Spirit, and made his Heart obſtinate, that He might deliver Him into thine Hand.* 'Tis certain, that God thus ordered the Sin and Folly of the Kings of *Canaan*, that they attempted not to make Peace with *Iſrael*, but with a ſtupid Boldneſs and Obſtinacy, ſet themſelves violently to oppoſe them and their God. Joſh. xi. 20. *For it was of the Lord, to harden their Hearts, that they ſhould come againſt* Iſrael *in Battle, that he might deſtroy them utterly, and that they might have no Favour; but that he might deſtroy them, as the Lord commanded* Moſes. 'Tis evident,

evident, that thus God ordered the treacherous Rebellion of *Zedekiah*, againſt the King of *Babylon*. Jer. lii. 3. *For thro' the Anger of the Lord it came to paſs in* Jeruſalem, *and* Judah, *'till He had caſt them out from his Preſence, that* Zedekiah *rebelled againſt the King of* Babylon. So 2 Kings xxiv. 20. And 'tis exceeding manifeſt, that God thus ordered the Rapine and unrighteous Ravages of *Nebuchadnezzar*, in ſpoiling and ruining the Nations round about. Jer. xxv. 9. *Behold, I will ſend and take all the Families of the North, ſaith the Lord, and* Nebuchadnezzar *my Servant, and will bring them againſt this Land, and againſt all the Nations round about; and will utterly deſtroy them, and make them an Aſtoniſhment, and an Hiſſing, and perpetual Deſolations.* Ch. xliii. 10. 11. *I will ſend and take* Nebuchadnezzer *the King of* Babylon, *my Servant; and I will ſet his Throne upon theſe Stones that I have hid, and he ſhall ſpread his royal Pavilion over them. And when he cometh, he ſhall ſmite the Land of* Egypt, *and deliver ſuch as are for Death to Death, and ſuch as are for Captivity to Captivity, and ſuch as are for the Sword to the Sword.* Thus God repreſents himſelf as *ſending* for *Nebuchadnezzar*, and *taking* of him and his Armies, and *bringing* him againſt the Nations which were to be deſtroyed by him, to that very End, that he might utterly deſtroy them, and make them deſolate: and as appointing the Work that he ſhould do, ſo particularly, that the very Perſons were deſigned, that he ſhould kill with the Sword; and thoſe that ſhould be kill'd with Famine and Peſtilence, and thoſe that ſhould be carried into Captivity; and that in doing all theſe Things, he ſhould act as his Servant: By which, leſs can't be intended, than that he ſhould ſerve his Purpoſes and Deſigns. And in *Jer.* xxvii. 4, 5, 6. God declares how he would cauſe him thus to ſerve his Deſigns, *viz.* by bringing this to paſs in his ſovereign Diſpoſals, as the great Poſſeſſor and Governor of the Univerſe, that diſpoſes all Things juſt as pleaſes him. *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of* Iſrael; *I have made the Earth, the Man and the Beaſt that are upon the Ground, by my great Power, and my ſtretched out Arm, and have given it unto whom it ſeemed meet unto me: And now I have given all theſe Lands into the Hands of* Nebuchadnezzar MY SERVANT, *and the Beaſts of the Field have I given alſo to ſerve him.* And *Nebuchadnezzar* is ſpoken of as doing theſe Things, by having his *Arms ſtrengthned* by God, and having *God's Sword put into his Hands, for this End.* Ezek. xxx. 24, 25, 26. Yea, God ſpeaks of his terribly ravaging and waſting the Nations, and cruelly deſtroying all Sorts, without Diſtinction of Sex or Age, as the Weapon in God's Hand, and the Inſtrument of his Indignation, which

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God makes use of to fulfil his own Purposes, and execute his own Vengeance. Jer. li. 20, &c. *Thou art my Battle-Axe, and Weapons of War. For with thee will I break in Pieces the Nations, and with thee I will destroy Kingdoms, and with thee I will break in Pieces the Horse and his Rider, and with thee I will break in Pieces the Chariot and his Rider; with thee also will I break in Pieces Man and Woman; and with thee will I break in Pieces Old and Young; and with thee will I break in Pieces the young Man and the Maid,* &c. 'Tis represented, that the Designs of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and those that destroyed *Jerusalem*, never could have been accomplished, had not God determined them, as well as they; Lam. iii. 37. *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commandeth it not?* And yet the King of *Babylon*'s thus destroying the Nations, and especially the *Jews*, is spoken of as his great Wickedness, for which God finally destroyed him. *Isai.* xiv. 4, 5, 6, 12. *Hab.* ii. 5,---12. and *Jer.* Chap. l. & li. 'Tis most manifest, that God, to serve his own Designs, providentially ordered *Shimei*'s cursing *David.* 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. *The Lord hath said unto him, Curse* David.---- *Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.*

'Tis certain, that God thus, for excellent, holy, gracious and glorious Ends, ordered the Fact which they committed, who were concerned in Christ's Death; and that therein they did but fulfil God's Designs. As, I trust, no Christian will deny it was the Design of God, that Christ should *be crucified*, and that for this End, he came into the World. 'Tis very manifest by many Scriptures, that the whole Affair of Christ's Crucifixion, with it's Circumstances, and the Treachery of *Judas*, that made Way for it, was ordered in God's Providence, in Pursuance of his Purpose; notwithstanding the Violence that is used with those plain Scriptures, to obscure and pervert the Sense of 'em. Act. ii. 23. *Him being delivered, by the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God,* † *ye have taken, and with wicked Hands, have crucified and slain.* Luk. xxii. 21,22. ‖ *But behold the Hand of him that betrayeth me, is with me on the Table: And truly*

† "*Grotius*, as well as *Beza*, observes, that προγνωσις must here signifie Decree; and *Elsner* has shewn that it has that Signification, in approved *Greek* Writers. And it is certain ενδοτον signifies one given up into the Hands of an Enemy." *Doddridge* in *Loc.*

‖ "As this Passage is not liable to the Ambiguities, which some have apprehended in *Act.* ii. 23. and iv. 28. (which yet seem on the whole to be parallel to it, in their most natural Construction)

the Son of Man goeth, as it was determined. Act. iv. 27, 28. *For of a Truth, againſt thy holy Child Jeſus, whom thou haſt anointed, both* Herod, *and* Pontius Pilate, *with the Gentiles, and the People of* Iſrael, *were gathered together, for to do whatſoever thy Hand and thy Counſel determined before to be done.* Act. iii. 17, 18. *And now Brethren, I wot that through Ignorance ye did it, as did alſo your Rulers: But theſe Things, which God before had ſhewed by the Mouth of all his Prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled.* So that what theſe Murderers of Chriſt did, is ſpoken of as what God brought to paſs or ordered, and that by which he fulfilled his own Word.

In Rev. xvii. 17. *The agreeing of the Kings of the Earth to give their Kingdom to the Beaſt*, tho' it was a very wicked Thing in them, is ſpoken of as *a fulfilling God's Will*, and what *God had put it into their Hearts to do.* 'Tis manifeſt, that God ſometimes permits Sin to be committed, and at the ſame Time orders Things ſo, that if he permits the Fact, it will come to paſs, becauſe on ſome Accounts he ſees it needful and of Importance that it ſhould come to paſs. Matt. xviii. 7. *It muſt needs be, that Offences come; but Wo to that Man by whom the Offence cometh.* With 1 Cor. xi. 19. *For there muſt alſo be Hereſies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifeſt among you.*

Thus it is certain and demonſtrable, from the holy Scriptures, as well as the Nature of Things, and the Principles of *Arminians*, that God permits Sin; and at the ſame Time, ſo orders Things, in his Providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to paſs, in Conſequence of his Permiſſion.

I proceed to obſerve in the next Place,

III. That there is a great Difference between God's being concerned thus, by his *Permiſſion*, in an Event and Act, which in the inherent Subject and Agent of it, is Sin, (tho' the Event will certainly follow on his Permiſſion,) and his being concerned in it by *producing* it and exerting the Act of Sin; or between his being the *Orderer* of it's certain Exiſtence, by *not hindering* it, under certain Circumſtances, and his being the proper

" tion) I look upon it as an evident Proof, that theſe Things are,
" in the Language of Scripture, ſaid to be determined or decreed
" (or exactly bounded and mark'd out by God, as the Word
" ὡρίζω moſt naturally ſignifies) which he ſees in Fact will hap-
" pen, in Conſequence of his Volitions, without any neceſſitating
" Agency; as well as thoſe Events, of which he is properly
" the Author." *Dodd.* in *Loc.*

proper *Actor* or *Author* of it, by a *positive Agency* or *Efficiency*. And this, notwithstanding what Dr. *Whitby* offers about a Saying of Philosophers, that *Causa deficiens, in Rebus necessariis, ad Causam per se efficientem reducenda est.* As there is a vast Difference between the Sun's being the Cause of the Lightsomeness and Warmth of the Atmosphere, and Brightness of Gold and Diamonds, by its Presence and positive Influence; and its being the Occasion of Darkness and Frost, in the Night, by its Motion, whereby it descends below the Horizon. The Motion of the Sun is the Occasion of the latter Kind of Events; but it is not the proper Cause, Efficient or Producer of them; tho' they are necessarily consequent on that Motion, under such Circumstances: No more is any Action of the divine Being the Cause of the Evil of Men's Wills. If the Sun were the proper *Cause* of Cold and Darkness, it would be the *Fountain* of these Things, as it is the Fountain of Light and Heat: And then something might be argued from the Nature of Cold and Darkness, to a Likeness of Nature in the Sun; and it might be justly infer'd, that the Sun itself is dark and cold, and that his Beams are black and frosty. But from its being the Cause no otherwise than by its Departure, no such Thing can be infer'd, but the contrary; it may justly be argued, that the Sun is a bright and hot Body, if Cold and Darkness are found to be the Consequence of its Withdrawment; and the more constantly and necessarily these Effects are connected with, and confined to its Absence, the more strongly does it argue the Sun to be the Fountain of Light and Heat. So, inasmuch as Sin is not the Fruit of any positive Agency or Influence of the most High, but on the contrary, arises from the withholding of his Action and Energy, and under certain Circumstances, necessarily follows on the Want of his Influence; this is no Argument that he is sinful, or his Operation Evil, or has any Thing of the Nature of Evil; but on the contrary, that He, and his Agency, are altogether good and holy, and that he is the Fountain of all Holiness. It would be strange arguing indeed, because Men never commit Sin, but only when God leaves 'em *to themselves*, and necessarily sin, when he does so, that therefore their Sin is not *from themselves*, but from God; and so, that God must be a sinful Being: As strange as it would be to argue, because it is always dark when the Sun is gone, and never dark when the Sun is present, that therefore all Darkness is from the Sun, and that his Disk and Beams must needs be black.

IV. It properly belongs to the ſupreme and abſolute Governor of the Univerſe, to order all important Events within his Dominion, by his Wiſdom : But the Events in the moral World are of the moſt important Kind ; ſuch as the moral Actions of intelligent Creatures, and their Conſequences.

Theſe Events will be ordered by ſomething. They will either be diſpoſed by Wiſdom, or they will be diſpoſed by Chance ; that is, they will be diſpoſed by blind and undeſigning Cauſes, if that were poſſible, and could be called a Diſpoſal. Is it not better, that the Good and Evil which happens in God's World, ſhould be ordered, regulated, bounded and determin'd by the good Pleaſure of an infinitely wiſe Being, who perfectly comprehends within his Underſtanding and conſtant View, the Univerſality of Things, in all their Extent and Duration, and ſees all the Influence of every Event, with Reſpect to every individual Thing and Circumſtance, throughout the grand Syſtem, and the whole of the eternal Series of Conſequences ; than to leave theſe Things to fall out by Chance, and to be determined by thoſe Cauſes which have no Underſtanding or Aim ? Doubtleſs, in theſe important Events, there is a better and a worſe, as to the Time, Subject, Place, Manner and Circumſtances of their coming to paſs, with Regard to their Influence on the State and Courſe of Things. And if there be, 'tis certainly beſt that they ſhould be determined to that Time, Place, &c. which is beſt. And therefore 'tis in its own Nature fit, that Wiſdom, and not Chance, ſhould order theſe Things. So that it belongs to the Being, who is the Poſſeſſor of infinite Wiſdom, and is the Creator and Owner of the whole Syſtem of created Exiſtences, and has the Care of all ; I ſay, it belongs to him, to take Care of this Matter ; and he would not do what is proper for him, if he ſhould neglect it. And it is ſo far from being unholy in him, to undertake this Affair, that it would rather have been unholy to neglect it ; as it would have been a neglecting what fitly appertains to him ; and ſo it would have been a very unfit and unſuitable Neglect.

Therefore the Sovereignty of God doubtleſs extends to this Matter : eſpecially conſidering, that if it ſhould be ſuppoſed to be otherwiſe, and God ſhould leave Men's Volitions, and all moral Events, to the Determination and Diſpoſition of blind and unmeaning Cauſes, or they ſhould be left to happen perfectly without a Cauſe ; this would be no more conſiſtent with Liberty, in any Notion of it, and particularly not in the

Arminian

Arminian Notion of it, than if these Events were subject to the Disposal of divine Providence, and the Will of Man were determined by Circumstances which are ordered and disposed by divine Wisdom; as appears by what has been already observed. But 'tis evident, that such a providential disposing and determining Men's moral Actions, tho' it infers a moral Necessity of those Actions, yet it does not in the least infringe the real Liberty of Mankind, ; the only Liberty that common Sense teaches to be necessary to moral Agency, which, as has been demonstrated, is not inconsistent whith such Necessity.

On the whole, it is manifest, that God may be, in the Manner which has been described, the Orderer and Disposer of that Event, which in the inherent Subject and Agent is moral Evil; and yet His so doing may be no moral Evil. He may will the Disposal of such an Event, and it's coming to pass for good Ends, and his Will not be an immoral or sinful Will, but a perfectly holy Will. And he may actually in his Providence so dispose and permit Things, that the Event may be certainly and infallibly, connected with such Disposal & Permission, and his Act therein not be an immoral or unholy, but a perfectly holy Act. Sin may be an evil Thing, and yet that there should be such a Disposal and Permission, as that it should come to pass, may be a good Thing. This is no Contradiction, or Inconsistence. *Joseph*'s Brethren's selling him into *Egypt*, consider it only as it was acted by them, and with Respect to their Views and Aims which were evil, was a very bad Thing; but it was a good Thing, as it was an Event of God's ordering, and consider'd with Respect to his Views and Aims which were good. Gen. l. 20. *As for you, ye thought Evil against me*; *but God meant it unto Good.* So the Crucifixion of Christ, if we consider only those Things which belong to the Event as it proceeded from his Murderers, and are comprehended within the Compass of the Affair considered as their Act, their Principles, Dispositions, Views and Aims; so it was one of the most heinous Things that ever was done; in many Respects the most horrid of all Acts: But consider it, as it was will'd and ordered of God, in the Extent of his Designs and Views, it was the most admirable and glorious of all Events; and God's willing the Event was the most holy Volition of God, that ever was made known to Men; and God's Act in ordering it, was a divine Act, which above all others, manifests the moral Excellency of the divine Being.

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The Conſideration of theſe Things may help us to a ſufficient Anſwer to the Cavils of *Arminians* concerning what has been ſuppoſed by many *Calviniſts*, of a Diſtinction between a *ſecret* and *revealed* Will of God, and their Diverſity one from the other; ſuppoſing, that the *Calviniſts* herein aſcribe inconſiſtent Wills to the moſt High: Which is without any Foundation. God's *ſecret* and *revealed* Will, or in other Words, his *diſpoſing* and *preceptive* Will may be diverſe, and exerciſed in diſſimilar Acts, the one in diſapproving and oppoſing, the other in willing and determining, without any Inconſiſtence. Becauſe, altho' theſe diſſimilar Exerciſes of the divine Will may in ſome Reſpects relate to the ſame Things, yet in Strictneſs they have different and contrary Objects, the one Evil and the other Good. Thus for Inſtance, the Crucifixion of Chriſt was a Thing contrary to the revealed or preceptive Will of God; becauſe, as it was view'd and done by his malignant Murderers, it was a Thing infinitely contrary to the holy Nature of God, and ſo neceſſarily contrary to the holy Inclination of his Heart revealed in his Law. Yet this don't at all hinder but that the Crucifixion of Chriſt, conſidered with all thoſe glorious Conſequences, which were within the View of the divine Omniſcience, might be indeed, and therefore might appear to God to be, a glorious Event; and conſequently be agreable to his Will, tho' this Will may be ſecret, *i. e.* not revealed in God's Law. And thus conſidered, the Crucifixion of Chriſt was not evil, but good. If the ſecret Exerciſes of God's Will were of a Kind that is diſſimilar and contrary to his revealed Will, reſpecting the ſame, or like Objects; if the Objects of both were good, or both evil; then indeed to aſcribe contrary Kinds of Volition or Inclination to God, reſpecting theſe Objects, would be to aſcribe an inconſiſtent Will to God: but to aſcribe to Him different and oppoſite Exerciſes of Heart, reſpecting different Objects, and Objects contrary one to another, is ſo far from ſuppoſing God's Will to be *inconſiſtent* with it ſelf, that it can't be ſuppoſed *conſiſtent* with it ſelf any other Way. For any Being to have a Will of Choice reſpecting Good, and at the ſame Time a Will of Rejection and Refuſal reſpecting Evil, is to be very conſiſtent: But the contrary, *viz.* to have the ſame Will towards theſe contrary Objects, and to chuſe and love both Good and Evil at the ſame Time, is to be very inconſiſtent.

There is no Inconſiſtence in ſuppoſing, that God may hate a Thing as it is in it ſelf, and conſidered ſimply as Evil, and yet

yet that it may be his Will it ſhould come to paſs, conſidering all Conſequences. I believe, there is no Perſon of good Underſtanding, who will venture to ſay, he is certain that it is impoſſible it ſhould be beſt, taking in the whole Compaſs and Extent of Exiſtence, and all Conſequences in the endleſs Series of Events, that there ſhould be ſuch a Thing as moral Evil in the World. * And if ſo, it will certainly follow,

* Here are worthy to be obſerved ſome Paſſages of a late noted Writer, of our Nation, that no Body who is acquainted with Him will ſuſpect to be very favourable to *Calviniſm*. " It is difficult " (ſays he) to handle the *Neceſſity of Evil* in ſuch a Manner, as " not to ſtumble ſuch as are not above being alarmed at Propo- " ſitions which have an uncommon Sound. But if Philoſophers " will but reflect calmly on the Matter, they will find, that con- " ſiſtently with the unlimited Power of the ſupreme Cauſe, it " may be ſaid, that in the beſt ordered Syſtem, *Evils* muſt have " Place."——*Turnbull's* PRINCIPLES *of moral Philoſophy*. Pag. 327, 328. He is there ſpeaking of *moral* Evils, as may be ſeen.

Again the ſame Author, in his *ſecond Vol.* entitled, *Chriſtian Philoſophy*, Pag. 35. has theſe Words: " If the Author and Governor of " all Things be infinitely *perfect*, then whatever is, is *right*; of all " poſſible Syſtems he hath choſen the *beſt*: and conſequently there " is *no abſolute Evil* in the Univerſe.—— This being the Caſe, " all the ſeeming *Imperfections* or *Evils* in it are ſuch only in a " *partial* View; and with Reſpect to the *whole* Syſtem, they are " *Goods*.

Ibid. Pag. 37. " *Whence then comes Evil*, is the Queſtion that hath in " all Ages been reckon'd the *Gordian* Knot in Philoſophy. And " indeed, if we own the Exiſtence of Evil in the World in an " *abſolute* Senſe, we diametrically contradict what hath been juſt " now prov'd of God. For if there be any *Evil* in the Syſtem, " that is not good with Reſpect to the *whole*, then is the *whole* not " good, but evil: or at beſt, very imperfect: And an *Author* muſt " be as his *Workmanſhip* is; as is the Effect, ſuch is the Cauſe. " But the Solution of this Difficulty is at Hand; *That there is no* " *Evil in the Univerſe*. What! Are there no Pains, no Imper- " fections? Is there no Miſery, no Vice in the World? Or are " not theſe *Evils?* Evils indeed they are; that is, thoſe of one " ſort are hurtful, and thoſe of the other ſort are equally hurtful " and abominable: But they are *not* evil or miſchievous with Re- " ſpect to the *whole*."

Ibid. Pag. 42. " But He is at the ſame Time ſaid to *create* Evil, " Darkneſs, Confuſion; and yet to do no Evil, but to be the Au- " thor of Good only. He is called the *Father of Lights*, the Author " of *every perfect and good Gift, with whom there is no Variableneſs* " *nor Shadow of Turning*, who *tempteth no Man*, but *giveth to all Men* " *liberally*,

low, that an infinitely wiſe Being, who always chuſes what is beſt, muſt chuſe that there ſhould be ſuch a Thing. And if ſo, then ſuch a Choice is not an Evil, but a wiſe and holy Choice. And if ſo, then that Providence which is agreable to ſuch a Choice, is a wiſe and holy Providence. Men do *will* Sin as Sin, and ſo are the Authors and Actors of it: They love it as Sin, and for evil Ends and Purpoſes. God don't will Sin as Sin, or for the ſake of any Thing evil; tho' it be his Pleaſure ſo to order Things, that He permitting, Sin will come to paſs; for the ſake of the great Good that by his Diſpoſal ſhall be the Conſequence. His willing to order Things ſo that Evil ſhould come to paſs, for the ſake of the contrary Good, is no Argument that He don't hate Evil, as Evil: And if ſo, then it is no Reaſon why he mayn't reaſonably forbid Evil as Evil, and puniſh it as ſuch.

The *Arminians* themſelves muſt be obliged, whether they will or no, to allow a Diſtinction of God's Will, amounting to juſt the ſame Thing that *Calviniſts* intend by their Diſtinction of a *ſecret and revealed Will*. They muſt allow a Diſtinction of thoſe Things which God thinks beſt ſhould be, conſidering all Circumſtances and Conſequences, and ſo are agreable to his diſpoſing Will, and thoſe Things which he loves, and are agreable to his Nature, in themſelves conſidered. Who is there that will dare to ſay, that the helliſh Pride, Malice and Cruelty of Devils, are agreable to God, and what He likes and approves? And yet, I truſt, there is no Chriſtian Divine but what will allow, that 'tis agreable to God's Will ſo to order and diſpoſe Things concerning them, ſo to leave them to themſelves, and give them up to their own Wickedneſs, that this perfect Wickedneſs ſhould be a neceſſary Conſequence. Beſure Dr. *Whitby*'s Words do plainly ſuppoſe and allow it. †

Theſe

" *liberally, and upbraideth not.* And yet by the Prophet *Iſaias* He " is introduced ſaying of Himſelf, *I form Light, and create Dark-* " *neſs; I make Peace, and create Evil: I the Lord do all theſe* " *Things.* What is the Meaning, the plain Language of all this, " but that the Lord delighteth in Goodneſs, and (as the Scripture " ſpeaks) Evil is *his ſtrange Work?* He intends and purſues the " univerſal *Good* of his Creation: and the *Evil* which happens, " is not permitted for it's own ſake, or thro' any Pleaſure in Evil, " but becauſe it is requiſite to the *greater Good* purſued."

† *Whitby* on the five Points. Edit. 2. P. 300, 305, 309.

These following Things may be laid down as Maxims of plain Truth, and indisputable Evidence.

1. That God is a *perfectly happy* Being, in the most absolute and highest Sense possible.

2. That it will follow from hence, that God is free from every Thing that is *contrary to Happiness*; and so, that in strict Propriety of Speech, there is no such Thing as any Pain, Grief or Trouble in God.

3. When any intelligent Being is really cross'd and disappointed, and Things are contrary to what He truly desires, He is the *less pleased*, or has *less Pleasure*, his *Pleasure and Happiness is diminished*, and he suffers what is disagreable to him, or is the Subject of something that is of a Nature contrary to Joy and Happiness, even Pain and Grief. **

From this last Axiom it follows, that if no Distinction is to be admitted between God's Hatred of Sin, and his Will with Respect to the Event and the Existence of Sin, as the alwise Determiner of all Events, under the View of all Consequences through the whole Compass and Series of Things; I say, then it certainly follows, that the coming to pass of every individual Act of Sin is truly, all Things considered, contrary to his Will, and that his Will is really cross'd in it; and this in Proportion as He hates it. And as God's Hatred of Sin is infinite, by Reason of the infinite Contrariety of his holy Nature to Sin; so his Will is infinitely cross'd, in every Act of Sin that happens. Which is as much as to say, He endures that which is infinitely disagreable to Him, by Means of every Act of Sin that He sees committed. And therefore, as appears by the preceeding Positions, He endures truly and really, infinite Grief or Pain from every Sin. And so He must be infinitely cross'd, and suffer infinite Pain, every Day, in Millions of Millions of Instances: He must continually be the Subject of an immense Number of *real*, and truly infinitely *great* Crosses and Vexations. Which would be to make him infinitely the most miserable of all Beings.

**Certainly 'tis not less absurd & unreasonable, to talk of God's Will and Desire's being truly and properly cross'd, without his suffering any Uneasiness, or any Thing grievous or disagreable, than it is to talk of something that may be called a *revealed Will*, which may in some Respect be different from a *secret* Purpose; wh Purpose may be fulfilled, when the other is opposed.

If any Objector should say; All that these Things amount to, is, that *God may do Evil that Good may come*; which is justly esteem'd immoral and sinful in Men; and therefore may be justly esteem'd inconsistent with the moral Perfections of God. I answer, That for God to dispose and permit Evil, in the Manner that has been spoken of, is not to do Evil that Good may come; for it is not to do Evil at all.---In Order to a Thing's being morally Evil, there must be one of these Things belonging to it: Either it must be a Thing *unfit* and *unsuitable* in it's own Nature; or it must have a *bad Tendency*; or it must proceed from an *evil Disposition*, and be done for an evil End. But neither of these Things can be attributed to God's ordering and permitting such Events, as the immoral Acts of Creatures, for good Ends. (1.) It is not *unfit in it's own Nature*, thatHe should do so. For it is in it's own Nature *fit*, that *infinite Wisdom*, and not blind Chance, should dispose moral Good and Evil in the World. And 'tis *fit*, that the Being who has *infinite Wisdom*, and is the Maker, Owner, and supreme Governor of the World, should take Care of that Matter. And therefore there is no *Unfitness*, or Unsuitableness in his doing it. It may be unfit, and so immoral, for any other Beings to go about to order this Affair; because they are not possess'd of a Wisdom, that in any Manner fits them for it; and in other Respects they are not fit to be trusted with this Affair; nor does it belong to them, they not being the Owners and Lords of the Universe.

We need not be afraid to affirm, that if a wise and good Man knew with absolute Certainty, it would be best, all Things considered, that there should be such a Thing as moral Evil in the World, it would not be contrary to his Wisdom and Goodness, for him to chuse that it should be so. 'Tis no evil Desire, to desire Good, and to desire that which, all Things considered, is best. And it is no unwise Choice, to chuse that That should be, which it is best should be; and to chuse the Existence of that Thing concerning which this is known, *viz.* that it is best it should be, and so is known in the whole to be most worthy to be chosen. On the contrary, it would be a plain Defect in Wisdom and Goodness, for him not to chuse it. And the Reason why he might not *order* it, if he were able, would not be because he might not desire it, but only the ordering of that Matter don't belong to him. But it is no Harm for Him who is by Right, and in the greatest Propriety, the supreme Orderer of all Things, to order every

† *h.* Thing

Thing in such a Manner, as it would be a Point of Wisdom in Him to chuse that they should be ordered. If it would be a plain Defect of Wisdom and Goodness in a Being, not to chuse that That should be, which He certainly knows it would, all Things considered, be best should be (as was but now observed) then it must be impossible for a Being who has no Defect of Wisdom and Goodness, to do otherwise than chuse it should be; and that, for this very Reason, because He is perfectly wise and good. And if it be agreable to perfect Wisdom and Goodness for him to chuse that it should be, and the ordering of all Things supremely and perfectly belongs to him, it must be agreable to infinite Wisdom and Goodness, to order that it should be. If the Choice is good, the ordering and disposing Things according to that Choice must also be good. It can be no Harm in one to whom it belongs *to do his Will in the Armies of Heaven, and amongst the Inhabitants of the Earth*, to execute a good Volition. If his Will be good, and the Object of his Will be, all Things considered, good and best, then the chusing or willing it is not *willing Evil* that Good may come. And if so, then his ordering according to that Will is not *doing Evil*, that Good may come.

2. 'Tis not of a *bad Tendency*, for the supreme Being thus to order and permit that moral Evil to be, which it is best should come to pass. For that it is of good Tendency, is the very Thing supposed in the Point now in Question.---- Christ's Crucifixion, tho' a most horrid Fact in them that perpetrated it, was of most glorious Tendency as permitted and ordered of God.

3. Nor is there any Need of supposing, it *proceeds from any evil Disposition or Aim:* for by the Supposition, what is aim'd at is Good, and Good is the actual Issue, in the final Result of Things.

Section X.

Concerning Sin's firſt Entrance *into the World.*

THE Things which have already been offered, may ſerve to obviate or clear many of the Objections which might be raiſed concerning Sin's firſt coming into the World; as tho' it would follow from the Doctrine maintain'd, that God muſt be the Author of the firſt Sin, thro' his ſo diſpoſing Things, that it ſhould neceſſarily follow from his Permiſſion, that the ſinful Act ſhould be committed, &c. I need not therefore ſtand to repeat what has been ſaid already, about ſuch a Neceſſity's not proving God to be the Author of Sin, in any ill Senſe, or in any ſuch Senſe as to infringe any Liberty of Man, concerned in his moral Agency, or Capacity of Blame, Guilt and Puniſhment.

But if it ſhould nevertheleſs be ſaid, Suppoſing the Caſe ſo, that God, when he had made Man, might ſo order his Circumſtances, that from theſe Circumſtances, together with his withholding further Aſſiſtance and divine Influence, his Sin would infallibly follow, Why might not God as well have firſt made Man with a fixed prevailing Principle of Sin in his Heart?

I anſwer, 1. It was meet, if Sin did come into Exiſtence, and appear in the World, it ſhould ariſe from the Imperfection which properly belongs to a Creature, as ſuch, and ſhould appear ſo to do, that it might appear not to be from God as the Efficient or Fountain. But this could not have been, if Man had been made at firſt with Sin in his Heart; nor unleſs the abiding Principle and Habit of Sin were firſt introduced by an evil Act of the Creature. If Sin had not aroſe from the Imperfection of the Creature, it would not have been ſo viſible, that it did not ariſe from God, as the poſitive Cauſe, and real Source of it.---- But it would require Room that can't be here allowed, fully to conſider all the Difficulties which have been ſtarted, concerning the firſt Entrance of Sin into the World.

And

And therefore,

2. I would obſerve, that Objections againſt the Doctrine that has been laid down, in Oppoſition to the *Arminian* Notion of Liberty, from theſe Difficulties, are altogether impertinent; becauſe no additional Difficulty is incurred, by adhering to a Scheme in this Manner differing from theirs, and none would be removed or avoided, by agreeing with, and maintaining theirs. Nothing that the *Arminians* ſay, about the Contingence, or ſelf-determining Power of Man's Will, can ſerve to explain with leſs Difficulty, how the firſt ſinful Volition of Mankind could take Place, and Man be juſtly charged with the Blame of it. To ſay, the Will was ſelf-determined, or determined by free Choice, in that ſinful Volition; which is to ſay, that the firſt ſinful Volition was determined by a foregoing ſinful Volition; is no Solution of the Difficulty. It is an odd Way of ſolving Difficulties, to advance greater, in order to it. To ſay, Two and Two makes Nine; or, that a Child begat his Father, ſolves no Difficulty: No more does it, to ſay, The firſt ſinful Act of Choice was before the firſt ſinful Act of Choice, and choſe and determined it, and brought it to paſs. Nor is it any better Solution, to ſay, The firſt ſinful Volition choſe, determined and produced itſelf; which is to ſay, It was before it was. Nor will it go any further towards helping us over the Difficulty, to ſay, The firſt ſinful Volition aroſe accidentally, without any Cauſe at all; any more than it will ſolve that difficult Queſtion, *How the World could be made out of Nothing?* to ſay, It came into Being out of Nothing, without any Cauſe; as has been already obſerved. And if we ſhould allow that That could be, that the firſt evil Volition ſhould ariſe by perfect Accident, without any Cauſe, it would relieve no Difficulty, about God's laying the Blame of it to Man. For how was Man to Blame for perfect Accident, which had no Cauſe, and which therefore, he (to be ſure) was not the Cauſe of, any more than if it came by ſome external Cauſe?--- Such Kind of Solutions are no better, than if ſome Perſon, going about to ſolve ſome of the ſtrange mathematical Paradoxes, about infinitely great and ſmall Quantities; as, that ſome infinitely great Quantities are infinitely greater than ſome other infinitely great Quantities; and alſo that ſome infinitely ſmall Quantities are infinitely leſs than others, which yet are infinitely little; in order to a Solution, ſhould ſay, That Mankind have been under a Miſtake, in ſuppoſing a greater Quantity to exceed a ſmaller; and that a Hundred multiplied by Ten, makes but a ſingle Unit.

SECTION

Section XI.

Of a ſuppoſed Inconſiſtence of theſe Principles, with GOD's moral Character.

THE Things which have been already obſerved, may be ſufficient to anſwer moſt of the Objections, and ſilence the great Exclamations of *Arminians* againſt the *Calviniſts*, from the ſuppoſed Inconſiſtence of *Calviniſtic* Principles with the moral Perfections of God, as exerciſed in his Government of Mankind. The Conſiſtence of ſuch a Doctrine of Neceſſity as has been maintained, with the Fitneſs and Reaſonableneſs of God's Commands, Promiſes and Threatnings, Rewards and Puniſhments, has been particularly conſidered: The Cavils of our Opponents, as tho' our Doctrine of Neceſſity made God the Author of Sin, have been anſwered; and alſo their Objection againſt theſe Principles, as inconſiſtent with God's Sincerity, in his Counſels, Invitations and Perſwaſions, has been already obviated, in what has been obſerved, reſpecting the Conſiſtence of what *Calviniſts* ſuppoſe concerning the ſecret and revealed Will of God: By that it appears, there is no Repugnance in ſuppoſing it may be the ſecret Will of God, that his Ordination and Permiſſion of Events ſhould be ſuch that it ſhall be a certain Conſequence, that a Thing never will come to paſs; which yet it is Man's Duty to do, and ſo God's preceptive Will, that he ſhould do; and this is the ſame Thing as to ſay, God may ſincerely command and require him to do it. And if he may be ſincere in commanding him, he may for the ſame Reaſon be ſincere in counſelling, inviting and uſing Perſuaſions with him to do it. Counſels and Invitations are Manifeſtations of God's preceptive Will, or of what God loves, and what is in it ſelf, and as Man's Act, agreable to his Heart; and not of his diſpoſing Will, and what he chuſes as a Part of his own infinite Scheme of Things. It has been particularly ſhewn, Part III. Section IV. that ſuch a Neceſſity as has been maintained, is not inconſiſtent with the Propriety and Fitneſs of divine Commands; and for the ſame Reaſon, not inconſiſtent with the Sincerity of Invitations and Counſels, in the Corollary at the End of that Section. Yea, it hath been ſhewn, Part III. Sect. 7. Coral. 1. that this Objection of *Arminians*,

minians, concerning the Sincerity and Use of divine Exhortations, Invitations and Counsels, is demonstrably against themselves.

Notwithstanding, I would further observe, that the Difficulty of reconciling the Sincerity of Counsels, Invitations and Persuasions, with such an antecedent known Fixedness of all Events, as has been supposed, is not peculiar to this Scheme, as distinguished from that of the Generality of *Arminians*, which acknowledge the absolute Foreknowledge of God: And therefore, it would be unreasonably brought as an Objection against my differing from them. The main seeming Difficulty in the Case is this: That God in counselling, inviting and persuading, makes a Shew of aiming at, seeking and using Endeavours for the Thing exhorted and persuaded to; whereas, 'tis impossible for any intelligent Being truly to seek, or use Endeavours for a Thing, which he at the same Time knows most perfectly will not come to pass; and that it is absurd to suppose, he makes the obtaining of a Thing his End, in his Calls and Counsels, which he at the same Time infallibly knows will not be obtain'd by these Means. Now, if God knows this, in the utmost Certainty and Perfection, the Way by which he comes by this Knowledge makes no Difference. If he knows it by the Necessity which he sees in Things, or by some other Means; it alters not the Case. But it is in Effect allowed by *Arminians* themselves, that God's inviting and persuading Men to do Things, which he at the same Time certainly knows will not be done, is no Evidence of Insincerity; because they allow, that God has a certain Foreknowledge of all Men's sinful Actions and Omissions. And as this is thus implicitly allowed by most *Arminians*, so all that pretend to own the Scriptures to be the Word of God, must be constrained to allow it.--- God commanded and counsel'd *Pharaoh* to let his People go, and used Arguments and Persuasions to induce him to it; he laid before him Arguments taken from his infinite Greatness and almighty Power (*Exod.* vii. 16.) and forewarned him of the fatal Consequences of his Refusal, from Time to Time; (*Chap.* viii. 1, 2, 20, 21. *Chap.* ix. 1----5. 13---17. and x. 3, 6.) He commanded *Moses*, and the Elders of *Israel*, to go and beseech *Pharaoh* to let the People go; and at the same Time told 'em, he knew surely that he would not comply to it. Exod. iii. 18, 19. *And thou shalt come, thou and the Elders of* Israel, *unto the King of* Egypt, *and you shall say unto him; The Lord God of the* Hebrews *hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech*

beseech thee, three Days Journey into the Wilderness, that we may Sacrifice unto the Lord our God: And, *I am sure that the King of* Egypt *will not let you go.* So our blessed Saviour, the Evening wherein he was betrayed, knew that *Peter* would shamefully deny him, before the Morning; for he declares it to him with Asseverations, to shew the Certainty of it; and tells the Disciples, that all of them should be offended because of him that Night; *Matt.* xxvi. 31,---35. *Joh.* xiii. 38. *Luk.* xxii. 31,--34. *Joh.* xvi. 32. And yet it was their Duty to avoid these Things; they were very sinful Things, which God had forbidden, and which it was their Duty to watch and pray against; and they were obliged to do so from the *Counsels* and *Persuasions* Christ used with them, at that very Time, so to do; Matt. xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation.* So that whatever Difficulty there can be in this Matter, it can be no Objection against any Principles which have been maintain'd in Opposition to the Principles of *Arminians*; nor does it any more concern me to remove the Difficulty, than it does them, or indeed all that call themselves Christians, and acknowledge the divine Authority of the Scriptures.---- Nevertheless, this Matter may possibly (God allowing) be more particularly and largely considered, in some future Discourse, on the Doctrine of *Predestination.*

But I would here observe, that however the Defenders of that Notion of Liberty of Will, which I have opposed, exclaim against the Doctrine of *Calvinists*, as tending to bring Men into Doubts, concerning the moral Perfections of God; it is their Scheme, and not the Scheme of *Calvinists*, that indeed is justly chargeable with this. For 'tis one of the most fundamental Points of their Scheme of Things, that a Freedom of Will, consisting in self-determination, without all Necessity, is essential to *Moral Agency.* This is the same Thing as to say, that such a Determination of the Will without all Necessity, must be in all intelligent Beings, in those Things, wherein they are *moral Agents*, or in their *moral Acts*: And from this it will follow, that God's Will is not necessarily determined, in any Thing he does, as a *moral Agent*, or in any of his *Acts* that are of a *moral Nature.* So that in all Things, wherein he acts *holily*, *justly* and *truly*, he don't act necessarily; or his Will is not necessarily determined to act holily and justly; because if it were necessarily determined, he would not be a *moral Agent* in thus acting: His Will would be attended with Necessity; which they say is inconsistent with *moral Agency:* " He can act

" no

" no otherwiſe ; He is at no Liberty in the Affair ; He is " determined by unavoidable invincible Neceſſity : Therefore " ſuch Agency is no moral Agency ; yea, no Agency at all, " properly ſpeaking : A neceſſary Agent is no Agent : He " being paſſive, and ſubject to Neceſſity, what He does is no " Act of his, but an Effect of a Neceſſity prior to any Act of " his." This is agreable to their Manner of arguing. Now then what is become of all our Proof of the moral Perfections of God ? How can we prove, that God certainly will in any one Inſtance do that which is juſt and holy ; ſeeing his Will is determin'd in the Matter by no Neceſſity ? We have no other Way of proving that any Thing *certainly* will be, but only by the Neceſſity of the Event. Where we can ſee no Neceſſity, but that the Thing may be, or may not be, there we are unavoidably left at a Loſs. We have no other Way properly and truly to demonſtrate the moral Perfections of God, but the Way that Mr. *Chubb* proves them, in P. 252, 261, 262, 263. of his Tracts ; *viz.* That God muſt neceſſarily perfectly know what is moſt worthy and valuable in it ſelf, which in the Nature of Things is beſt and fitteſt to be done. And as this is moſt eligible in it ſelf, He being omniſcient, muſt ſee it to be ſo ; and being both omniſcient and ſelf-ſufficient, cannot have any Temptation to reject it ; and ſo muſt neceſſarily will that which is beſt. And thus, by this Neceſſity of the Determination of God's Will to what is good and beſt, we demonſtrably eſtabliſh God's moral Character.

Corol. From Things which have been obſerved, it appears, that moſt of the Arguments from Scripture, which *Arminians* make uſe of to ſupport their Scheme, are no other than *begging the Queſtion.* For in theſe their Arguments they determine in the firſt Place, that without ſuch a Freedom of Will as they hold, Men can't be proper moral Agents, nor the Subjects of Command, Counſel, Perſuaſion, Invitation, Promiſes, Threatnings, Expoſtulations, Rewards and Puniſhments ; and that without ſuch a Freedom 'tis to no Purpoſe for Men to take any Care, or uſe any Diligence, Endeavours or Means, in order to their avoiding Sin, or becoming holy, eſcaping Puniſhment or obtaining Happineſs : and having ſuppoſed theſe Things, which are grand Things in Queſtion in the Debate, then they heap up Scriptures containing Commands, Counſels, Calls, Warnings, Perſuaſions, Expoſtulations, Promiſes and Threatnings ; (as doubtleſs they may find enough ſuch ; the Bible is confeſſedly full of them, from the Beginning to the

End) and then they glory, how full the Scripture is on their Side, how many more Texts there are that evidently favour their Scheme, than ſuch as ſeem to favour the contrary. But let them firſt make manifeſt the Things in Queſtion, which they ſuppoſe and take for granted, and ſhew them to be conſiſtent with themſelves, and produce clear Evidence of their Truth; and they have gain'd their Point, as all will confeſs, without bringing one Scripture. For none denies, that there are Commands, Counſels, Promiſes, Threatnings, &c. in the Bible. But unleſs they do theſe Things, their multiplying ſuch Texts of Scripture is inſignificant and vain.

It may further be obſerved, that ſuch Scriptures as they bring, are really againſt them, and not for them. As it has been demonſtrated, that 'tis their Scheme, and not ours, that is inconſiſtent with the Uſe of Motives and Perſuaſives, or any moral Means whatſoever, to induce Men to the Practice of Vertue, or abſtaining from Wickedneſs: Their Principles, and not ours, are repugnant to moral Agency, and inconſiſtent with moral Government, with Law or Precept, with the Nature of Vertue or Vice, Reward or Puniſhment, and with every Thing whatſoever of a moral Nature, either on the Part of the moral Governor, or in the State, Actions or Conduct of the Subject.

Section XII.

Of a ſuppoſed Tendency of theſe Principles to Atheiſm *and* Licentiouſneſs.

IF any object againſt what has been maintain'd, that it tends to *Atheiſm*; I know not on what Grounds ſuch an Objection can be raiſed, unleſs it be that ſome Atheiſts have held a Doctrine of Neceſſity which they ſuppoſe to be like this. But if it be ſo, I am perſuaded the *Arminians* would not look upon it juſt, that their Notion of Freedom and Contingence ſhould be charged with a Tendency to all the Errors that ever any embraced, who have held ſuch Opinions. The *Stoic*

Stoic Philosophers, whom the *Calvinists* are charged with agreeing with, were no Atheists, but the greatest Theists, and nearest a-kin to Christians in their Opinions concerning the Unity and the Perfections of the Godhead, of all the Heathen Philosophers. And *Epicurus*, that chief Father of Atheism, maintain'd no such Doctrine of Necessity, but was the greatest Maintainer of Contingence.

The Doctrine of Necessity, which supposes a necessary Connection of all Events, on some antecedent Ground and Reason of their Existence, is the only Medium we have to prove the Being of God. And the contrary Doctrine of Contingence, even as maintain'd by *Arminians* (which certainly implies or infers, that Events may come into Existence, or begin to be, without Dependence on any Thing foregoing, as their Cause, Ground or Reason) takes away all Proof of the Being of God; which Proof is summarily express'd by the Apostle, in *Rom.* i. 20. And this is a Tendency to *Atheism* with a Witness. So that indeed it is the Doctrine of *Arminians*, and not of the *Calvinists*, that is justly charged with a Tendency to *Atheism*; it being built on a Foundation that is the utter Subversion of every demonstrative Argument for the Proof of a Deity; as has been shown, Part II. Sect. 3d.

And whereas it has often been said, that the *Calvinistic* Doctrine of Necessity, saps the Foundations of all Religion and Vertue, and tends to the greatest Licentiousness of Practice: This Objection is built on the Pretence, that our Doctrine renders vain all Means and Endeavours, in order to be vertuous and religious. Which Pretence has been already particularly considered in the 5th *Section* of this *Part*; where it has been demonstrated, that this Doctrine has no such Tendency; but that such a Tendency is truly to be charged on the contrary Doctrine: inasmuch as the Notion of Contingence, which their Doctrine implies, in its certain Consequences, overthrows all Connection, in every Degree, between Endeavour and Event, Means and End.

And besides, if many other Things which have been observed to belong to the *Arminian* Doctrine, or to be plain Consequences of it, be considered, there will appear just Reason to suppose that it is *that*, which must rather tend to Licentiousness. Their Doctrine excuses all evil Inclinations, which Men find to be natural; because in such Inclinations, they

are not ſelf-determined, as ſuch Inclinations are not owing to anyChoice orDetermination of their ownWills. Which leads Men wholly to juſtify themſelves in all their wicked Actions, ſo far as natural Inclination has had a Hand in determining their Wills, to the Commiſſion of 'em. Yea, theſe Notions which ſuppoſe moral Neceſſity and Inability to be inconſiſtent with Blame or moral Obligation, will directly lead Men to juſtify the vileſt Acts and Practices, from the Strength of their wicked Inclinations of all Sorts; ſtrong Inclinations inducing a moral Neceſſity; yea, to excuſe every Degree of evil Inclination, ſo far as this has evidently prevailed, and been the Thing which has determined their Wills: Becauſe, ſo far as antecedent Inclination determined the Will, ſo far the Will was without Liberty of Indifference and Self-determination. Which at laſt will come to this, that Men will juſtify themſelves in all the Wickedneſs they commit. It has been obſerved already, that this Scheme of Things does exceedingly diminiſh the Guilt of Sin, and the Difference between the greateſt and ſmalleſt Offences: * And if it be purſued in its real Conſequences, it leaves Room for no ſuch Thing, as either Vertue or Vice, Blame or Praiſe in the World. † And then again, how naturally does this Notion of the ſovereign ſelf-determining Power of the Will, in all Things, vertuous or vicious, and whatſoever deſerves either Reward or Puniſhment, tend to encourage Men to put off the Work of Religion and Vertue, and turning from Sin to God; it being that which they have a ſovereign Power to determine themſelves to, juſt when they pleaſe; or if not, they are wholly excuſeable in going on in Sin, becauſe of their Inability to do any other.

If it ſhould be ſaid, that the Tendency of this Doctrine of Neceſſity, to Licentiouſneſs, appears by the Improvement many at this Day actually make of it, to juſtify themſelves in their diſſolute Courſes; I will not deny that ſome Men do unreaſonably abuſe this Doctrine, as they do many other Things which are true and excellent in their own Nature: But I deny that this proves, the Doctrine itſelf has any Tendency to Licentiouſneſs. I think, the Tendency of Doctrines, by what now appears in the World, and in our Nation in particular, may much more juſtly be argued from the general Effect which has

* Part III. Sect. 6.

† Part III. Sect. 6. Ibid. Sect. 7. Part IV. Sect. 1. Part III. Sect. 3. Corol. 1. after the firſt Head.

has been seen to attend the prevailing of the Principles of *Arminians*, and the contrary Principles; as both have had their Turn of general Prevalence in our Nation. If it be indeed, as is pretended, that *Calvinistic* Doctrines undermine the very Foundation of all Religion and Morality, and enervate and disannul all rational Motives, to holy and vertuous Practice; and that the contrary Doctrines give the Inducements to Vertue and Goodness their proper Force, and exhibit Religion in a rational Light, tending to recommend it to the Reason of Mankind, and enforce it in a Manner that is agreable to their natural Notions of Things: I say, if it be thus, 'tis remarkable, that Vertue and religious Practice should prevail most, when the former Doctrines, so inconsistent with it, prevailed almost universally: And that ever since the latter Doctrines, so happily agreeing with it, and of so proper & excellent a Tendency to promote it, have been gradually prevailing, Vice, Prophaneness, Luxury and Wickedness of all Sorts, and Contempt of all Religion, and of every Kind of Seriousness and Strictness of Conversation, should proportionably prevail; and that these Things should thus accompany one another, and rise and prevail one with another, now for a whole Age together. 'Tis remarkable, that this happy Remedy (discover'd by the free Enquiries, and superior Sense and Wisdom of this Age) against the perniciousEffects of *Calvinism*, so inconsistent withReligion, and tending so much to banish all Vertue from the Earth, should on so long a Trial, be attended with no good Effect; but that the Consequence should be the Reverse of Amendment; that in Proportion, as the Remedy takes Place, and is thoroughly applied, so the Disease should prevail; and the very same dismal Effect take Place, to the highest Degree, which *Calvinistic* Doctrines are supposed to have so great a Tendency to; even the banishing of Religion and Vertue, and the prevailing of unbounded Licentiousness of Manners. If these Things are truly so, they are very remarkable, and Matter of very curious Speculation!

Section XIII.

Concerning that Objection againſt the Reaſoning, *by which the* Calviniſtic *Doctrine is ſupported, that it is* Metaphyſical *and* Abſtruſe.

IT has often been objected againſt the Defenders of *Calviniſtic* Principles, that in their Reaſonings, they run into nice Scholaſtic Diſtinctions, and abſtruſe metaphyſical Subtilties, and ſet theſe in Oppoſition to common Senſe. And 'tis poſſible, that after the former Manner it may be alledged againſt the Reaſoning by which I have endeavoured to confute the *Arminian* Scheme of Liberty and moral Agency, that it is very abſtracted and metaphyſical.--- Concerning this, I would obſerve the following Things.

I. If that be made an Objection againſt the foregoing Reaſoning, that it is *metaphyſical*, or may properly be reduced to the Science of *Metaphyſicks*, it is a very impertinent Objection; whether it be ſo or no, is not worthy of any Diſpute or Controverſy. If the Reaſoning be good, 'tis as frivolous to enquire what Science it is properly reduc'd to, as what Language it is delivered in: And for a Man to go about to confute the Arguments of his Opponent, by telling him, his Arguments are *Metaphyſical*, would be as weak as to tell him, his Arguments could not be ſubſtantial, becauſe they were written in *French* or *Latin*. The Queſtion is not, Whether what is ſaid be Metaphyſicks, Phyſicks, Logick, or Mathematicks, Latin, French, Engliſh, or Mohawk? But, Whether the Reaſoning be good, and the Arguments truly concluſive? The foregoing Arguments are no more metaphyſical, than thoſe which we uſe againſt the Papiſts, to diſprove their Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation; alledging, it is inconſiſtent with the Notion of corporeal Identity, that it ſhould be in ten Thouſand Places at the ſame Time. 'Tis by metaphyſical Arguments only we are able to prove, that the rational Soul is not corporeal; that Lead or Sand can't think; that Thoughts are not ſquare or round, or don't weigh a Pound. The Arguments by which we prove the

the Being of God, if handled cloſely and diſtinctly, ſo as to ſhew their clear and demonſtrative Evidence, muſt be metaphyſically treated. 'Tis by Metaphyſicks only, that we can demonſtrate, that God is not limited to a Place, or is not mutable; that he is not ignorant, or forgetful; that it is impoſſible for him to lie, or be unjuſt; and that there is one God only, and not Hundreds or Thouſands. And indeed we have no ſtrict Demonſtration of any Thing, excepting mathematical Truths, but by Metaphyſicks. We can have no Proof, that is properly demonſtrative, of any one Propoſition, relating to the Being and Nature of God, his Creation of the World, the Dependence of all Things on him, the Nature of Bodies or Spirits, the Nature of our own Souls, or any of the great Truths of Morality and natural Religion, but what is metaphyſical. I am willing, my Arguments ſhould be brought to the Teſt of the ſtricteſt and juſteſt Reaſon, and that a clear, diſtinct and determinate Meaning of the Terms I uſe, ſhould be inſiſted on; but let not the Whole be rejected, as if all were confuted, by fixing on it the Epithet *Metaphyſical.*

II. If the Reaſoning which has been made uſe of, be in ſome Senſe Metaphyſical, it will not follow, that therefore it muſt needs be abſtruſe, unintelligible, and a-kin to the Jargon of the Schools. I humbly conceive, the foregoing Reaſoning, at leaſt as to thoſe Things which are moſt material belonging to it, depends on no abſtruſe Definitions or Diſtinctions, or Terms without a Meaning, or of very ambiguous and undetermined Signification, or any Points of ſuch Abſtraction and Subtilty, as tends to involve the attentive Underſtanding in Clouds and Darkneſs. There is no high Degree of Refinement and abſtruſe Speculation, in determining, that a Thing is not before it is, and ſo can't be the Cauſe of itſelf; or that the firſt Act of free Choice, has not another Act of free Choice going before that, to excite or direct it; or in determining, that no Choice is made, while the Mind remains in a State of abſolute Indifference; that Preference and Equilibrium never co-exiſt; and that therefore no Choice is made in a State of Liberty, conſiſting in Indifference: And that ſo far as the Will is determined by Motives, exhibited and operating previous to the Act of the Will, ſo far it is not determined by the Act of the Will itſelf; that nothing can begin to be, which before was not, without a Cauſe, or ſome antecedent Ground or Reaſon, why it then begins to be; that Effects depend on their Cauſes, and are connected with them; that Vertue is not the

worſe,

worſe, nor Sin the better, for the Strength of Inclination, with which it is practiſed, and the Difficulty which thence ariſes of doing otherwiſe; that when it is already infallibly known, that a Thing will be, it is not a Thing contingent whether it will ever be or no; or that it can be truly ſaid, notwithſtanding, that it is not neceſſary it ſhould be, but it either may be, or may not be. And the like might be obſerved of many other Things which belong to the foregoing Reaſoning.

If any ſhall ſtill ſtand to it, that the foregoing Reaſoning is nothing but metaphyſical Sophiſtry; and that it muſt be ſo, that the ſeeming Force of the Arguments all depends on ſome Fallacy and Wile that is hid in the Obſcurity, which always attends a great Degree of metaphyſical Abſtraction and Refinement; and ſhall be ready to ſay, "Here is indeed ſome-"thing that tends to confound the Mind, but not to ſatisfy it: "For who can ever be truly ſatisfied in it, that Men are fitly "blamed or commended, puniſhed or rewarded, for thoſe "Volitions which are not from themſelves, and of whoſe Ex-"iſtence they are not the Cauſes. Men may refine, as much "as they pleaſe, and advance their abſtract Notions, and make "out a Thouſand ſeeming Contradictions, to puzzle our Un-"derſtandings; yet there can be no Satisfaction in ſuch Doctrine "as this: The natural Senſe of the Mind of Man will always "reſiſt it." * I humbly conceive, that ſuch an Objector, if he has

* A certain noted Author, of the preſent Age, ſays, The Arguments for *Neceſſity* are nothing but *Quibbling, or Logomachy, uſing Words without a Meaning, or Begging the Queſtion.*—I don't know what Kind of Neceſſity any Authors He may have Reference to, are Advocates for; or whether they have managed their Arguments well, or ill. As to the Arguments I have made uſe of, if they are *Quibbles*, they may be ſhewn to be ſo: ſuch Knots are capable of being untied, and the Trick and Cheat may be detected and plainly laid open. If this be fairly done, with Reſpect to the Grounds and Reaſons I have relied upon, I ſhall have juſt Occaſion for the future to be ſilent, if not to be aſhamed of my Argumentations. I am willing, my Proofs ſhould be thoro'ly examined; and if there be nothing but *Begging the Queſtion*, or meer *Logomachy*, or Diſpute of Words, let it be made manifeſt, and ſhewn how the ſeeming Strength of the Argument depends on my *uſing Words without a Meaning*, or ariſes from the Ambiguity of Terms, or my making uſe of Words in an indeterminate and unſteady Manner; and that the Weight of my Reaſons reſt mainly on ſuch a Foundation: And then, I ſhall either be ready to retract what I have urged, and thank the Man that

has Capacity and Humility and Calmness of Spirit, sufficient impartially and thoroughly to examine himself, will find that he knows not really what he would be at; and that indeed his Difficulty is nothing but a meer Prejudice, from an inadvertent customary Use of Words, in a Meaning that is not clearly understood, nor carefully reflected upon.---- Let the Objector reflect again, if he has Candor and Patience enough, and don't scorn to be at the Trouble of close Attention in the Affair.---- He would have a Man's Volition be *from himself*. Let it be *from himself*, most primarily and originally of any Way

 conceivable;

that has done the kind Part, or shall be justly exposed for my Obstinacy.

The same Author is abundant in appealing, in this Affair, from what he calls *Logomachy and Sophistry*, to *Experience*.——— A Person can experience only what passes in his own Mind. But yet, as we may well suppose, that all Men have the same human Faculties; so a Man may well argue from his own Experience to that of others, in Things that shew the Nature of those Faculties, and the Manner of their Operation. But then one has as good Right to alledge his Experience, as another. As to my own Experience, I find, that in innumerable Things I can do as I will; that the Motions of my Body, in many Respects, instantaneously follow the Acts of my Will concerning those Motions; and that my Will has some Command of my Thoughts; and that the Acts of my Will are my own, *i. e.* that they are Acts of my Will, the Volitions of my own Mind; or in other Words, that what I will, I will. Which, I presume, is the Sum of what others experience in this Affair. But as to finding by Experience, that my Will is originally determin'd by it self; or that my Will first chusing what Volition there shall be, the chosen Volition accordingly follows; and that this is the first Rise of the Determination of my Will in any Affair; or that any Volition arises in my Mind contingently; I declare, I know nothing in my self, by Experience, of this Nature; and nothing that ever I experienced, carries the least Appearance or Shadow of any such Thing, or gives me any more Reason to suppose or suspect any such Thing, than to suppose that my Volitions existed twenty Years before they existed. 'Tis true, I find my self possess'd of my Volitions before I can see the effectual Power of any Cause to produce them (for the Power and Efficacy of the Cause is not seen but by the Effect) and this, for ought I know, may make some imagine, that Volition has no Cause, or that it produces itself. But I have no more Reason from hence to determine any such Thing, than I have to determine that I gave my self my own Being, or that I came into Being accidentally without a Cause, because I first found my self possessed of Being, before I had Knowledge of a Cause of my Being.

conceivable ; that is, from his own Choice : How will that help the Matter, as to his being juſtly blamed or praiſed, unleſs that Choice itſelf be blame or praiſe-worthy ? And how is the Choice itſelf (an ill Choice, for Inſtance) blame-worthy, according to theſe Principles, unleſs that be from himſelf too, in the ſame Manner ; that is, from his own Choice ? But the original and firſt determining Choice in the Affair is not from his Choice : His Choice is not the Cauſe of it.---And if it be from himſelf ſome other Way, and not from his Choice, ſurely that will not help the Matter : If it ben't from himſelf of Choice, then it is not from himſelf voluntarily ; and if ſo, he is ſurely no more to Blame, than if it were not from himſelf at all. It is a Vanity, to pretend it is a ſufficient Anſwer to this, to ſay, that it is nothing but metaphyſical Refinement and Subtilty, and ſo attended with Obſcurity and Uncertainty.

If it be the natural Senſe of our Minds, that what is blameworthy in aMan muſt be from himſelf,then it doubtleſs is alſo, that it muſt be from ſomething *bad* in himſelf, a *bad Choice*, or *bad Diſpoſition*. But then our natural Senſe is, that this bad Choice or Diſpoſition is evil *in it ſelf*, and the Man blameworthy for it, *on it's own Account*, without taking into our Notion of it's Blame-worthineſs, another bad Choice, or Diſpoſition going before this, from whence this ariſes : for that is a ridiculous Abſurdity, running us into an immediate Contradiction, which our natural Senſe of Blame-worthineſs has nothing to do with,and never comes into theMind, nor is ſuppoſed in the Judgment we naturally make of the Affair. As was demonſtrated before, natural Senſe don't place the moral Evil of Volitions and Diſpoſitions in the Cauſe of them, but the Nature of them. An evil Thing's being FROM a Man, or from ſomething antecedent in him, is not eſſential to the original Notion we have of Blame-worthineſs : But 'tis it's being the Choice of the Heart ; as appears by this, that if a Thing be *from* us, and not from our Choice, it has not the Nature of Blame-worthineſs or Ill-deſert, according to our natural Senſe. When a Thing is *from* a Man, in that Senſe, that it is from his Will or Choice, he is to Blame for it, becauſe his Will is IN IT : So far as the Will is *in it*, Blame is *in it*, and no further. Neither do we go any further in our Notion of Blame, to enquire whether the bad Will be FROM a bad Will : There is no Conſideration of the Original of that bad Will ; becauſe according to our natural Apprehenſion,

Blame

Blame *originally consists in it.* Therefore a Thing's being *from* a Man, is a secondary Consideration, in the Notion of Blame or Ill-desert. Because those Things in our *external* Actions, are most properly said to be *from* us, which are *from* our Choice; and no other *external* Actions but those that are from us in this Sense, have the Nature of Blame; and they indeed, not so properly because they are *from us*, as because we are *in them*, i. e. our Wills are in them; not so much because they are from some *Property* of ours, as because they are our *Properties.*

However, all these external Actions being truly *from us*, as their Cause; and we being so used, in ordinary Speech, and in the common Affairs of Life, to speak of Men's Actions and Conduct that we see, and that affect human Society, as deserving Ill or Well, as worthy of Blame or Praise; hence it is come to pass, that Philosophers have incautiously taken all their Measures of Good and Evil, Praise and Blame, from the Dictates of common Sense, about these *overt Acts* of Men; to the running of every Thing into the most lamentable and dreadful Confusion. And therefore I observe,

III. 'Tis so far from being true (whatever may be pretended) that the Proof of the Doctrine which has been maintain'd, depends on certain abstruse, unintelligible, metaphysical Terms and Notions; and that the *Arminian* Scheme, without needing such Clouds and Darkness, for it's Defence, is supported by the plain Dictates of common Sense; that the very Reverse is most certainly true, and that to a great Degree. 'Tis Fact, that they, and not we, have confounded Things with metaphysical, unintelligible Notions and Phrases, and have drawn them from the Light of plain Truth, into the gross Darkness of abstruse metaphysical Propositions, and Words without a Meaning. Their pretended Demonstrations depend very much on such unintelligible, metaphysical Phrases, as *Self-determination* and *Sovereignty of the Will*; and the metaphysical Sense they put on such Terms, as *Necessity*, *Contingency*, *Action*, *Agency*, &c. quite diverse from their Meaning as used in common Speech; and which, as they use them, are without any consistent Meaning, or any Manner of distinct consistent Ideas; as far from it as any of the abstruse Terms and perplexed Phrases of the Peripatetick Philosophers, or the most unintelligible Jargon of the Schools, or the Cant of the wildest Fanaticks. Yea, we may be bold to say, these metaphysical Terms, on which they build so much, are what they use without knowing what they mean themselves; they are pure metaphysical Sounds, without any

Ideas whatſoever in their Minds to anſwer them ; in-as-much as it has been demonſtrated, that there cannot be any Notion in the Mind conſiſtent with theſe Expreſſions, as they pretend to explain them ; becauſe their Explanations deſtroy themſelves. No ſuch Notions as imply Self-contradiction, and Self-abolition, and this a great many Ways, can ſubſiſt in the Mind ; as there can be no Idea of a Whole which is leſs than any of it's Parts, or of ſolid Extenſion without Dimenſions, or of an Effect which is before it's Cauſe.---- *Arminians* improve theſe Terms, as Terms of Art, and in their metaphyſical Meaning, to advance and eſtabliſh thoſe Things which are contrary to common Senſe, in a high Degree. Thus, inſtead of the plain vulgar Notion of Liberty, which all Mankind, in every Part of the Face of the Earth, and in all Ages, have ; conſiſting in Opportunity to do as one pleaſes ; they have introduced a new ſtrange Liberty, conſiſting in Indifference, Contingence, and Self-determination ; by which they involve themſelves and others in great Obſcurity, and manifold groſs Inconſiſtence. So, inſtead of placing Vertue and Vice, as common Senſe places them very much, in fix'd Bias and Inclination, and greater Vertue and Vice in ſtronger and more eſtabliſh'd Inclination ; theſe, thro' their Refinings and abſtruſe Notions, ſuppoſe a Liberty conſiſting in Indifference, to be eſſential to all Vertue and Vice. So they have reaſoned themſelves, not by metaphyſical Diſtinctions, but metaphyſical Confuſion, into many Principles about moral Agency, Blame, Praiſe, Reward and Puniſhment, which are, as has been ſhewn, exceeding contrary to the common Senſe of Mankind ; and perhaps to their own Senſe, which governs them in common Life.

THE

THE CONCLUSION.

WHETHER the Things which have been alledged, are liable to any tolerable Anſwer in the Ways of calm, intelligible and ſtrict Reaſoning, I muſt leave others to judge: But I am ſenſible they are liable to one Sort of Anſwer. 'Tis not unlikely, that ſome who value themſelves on the ſuppoſed rational and generous Principles of the modern faſhionable Divinity, will have their Indignation and Diſdain raiſed at the Sight of this Diſcourſe, and on perceiving what Things are pretended to be proved in it. And if they think it worthy of being read, or of ſo much Notice as to ſay much about it, they may probably renew the uſual Exclamations, with additional Vehemence and Contempt, about the *Fate of the Heathen*, Hobbes's *Neceſſity*, and *making Men meer Machines*; accumulating the terrible Epithets of *fatal*, *unfruſtrable*, *inevitable*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. and it may be, with the Addition of *horrid* and *blaſphemous*; and perhaps much Skill may be uſed to ſet forth Things which have been ſaid, in Colours which ſhall be ſhocking to the Imaginations, and moving to the Paſſions of thoſe who have either too little Capacity, or too much Confidence of the Opinions they have imbibed, and Contempt of the contrary, to try the Matter by any ſerious and circumſpect Examination. † Or Difficulties may be ſtarted and inſiſted on which

† A Writer, of the preſent Age, whom I have ſeveral Times had Occaſion to mention, ſpeaks once and again of thoſe who hold the Doctrine of *Neceſſity*, as ſcarcely worthy of the Name of *Philoſophers*.——I don't know, whether he has reſpect to any particular Notion of Neceſſity, that ſome may have maintain'd; and if ſo, what Doctrine of Neceſſity it is that He means.——Whether I am worthy of the Name of a Philoſopher, or not, would be a Queſtion little to the preſent Purpoſe. If any, and ever ſo many, ſhould deny it, I ſhould not think it worth the while to enter into a Diſpute on that Queſtion; tho' at the ſame Time I might expect, ſome

which don't belong to the Controverſy; becauſe, let them be more or leſs real, and hard to be reſolved, they are not what are owing to any Thing diſtinguiſhing of this Scheme from that of the *Arminians*, and would not be removed nor diminiſhed by renouncing the former, and adhering to the latter. Or ſome particular Things may be pick'd out, which they may think will ſound harſheſt in the Ears of the Generality; and theſe may be gloſs'd and deſcanted on, with tart and contemptuous Words; and from thence, the whole treated with Triumph and Inſult.

'Tis eaſy to ſee how the Deciſion of moſt of the Points in Controverſy, between *Calviniſts* and *Arminians*, depends on the Determination of this grand Article concerning *the Freedom of the Will requiſite to moral Agency*; and that by clearing and eſtabliſhing the *Calviniſtic* Doctrine in this Point, the chief Arguments are obviated, by which *Arminian* Doctrines in general are ſupported, and the contrary Doctrines demonſtratively confirmed. Hereby it becomes manifeſt, that God's moral Government over Mankind, his treating them as moral Agents, making them the Objects of his Commands, Counſels, Calls, Warnings, Expoſtulations, Promiſes, Threatnings, Rewards and Puniſhments, is not inconſiſtent with a *determining Diſpoſal* of all Events, of every Kind, throughout the Univerſe, *in his Providence*; either by poſitive Efficiency, or Permiſſion. Indeed ſuch an *univerſal, determining Providence*, infers ſome Kind of Neceſſity of all Events; ſuch a Neceſſity as implies an infallible previous Fixedneſs of the Futurity of the Event: But no other Neceſſity of moral Events, or Volitions of intelligent Agents, is needful in order to this, than *moral Neceſſity*; which does as much aſcertain the Futurity of the Event, as any other Neceſſity. But, as has been demonſtrated, ſuch a Neceſſity is not at all repugnant to moral Agency, and the reaſonable Uſe of Commands, Calls, Rewards, Puniſhments, &c. Yea, not only are Objections of this Kind againſt the Doctrine of an univerſal *determining Providence*, removed by what has been ſaid; but the Truth of ſuch a Doctrine is demonſtrated. As it

ſome better Anſwer ſhould be given to the Arguments brought for the Truth of the Doctrine I maintain; and I might further reaſonably deſire, that it might be conſidered, whether it don't become thoſe who are *truly worthy* of the Name of Philoſophers, to be ſenſible, that there is a Difference between *Argument* and *Contempt*; yea, and a Difference between the Contemptibleneſs of the *Perſon* that argues, and the Inconcluſiveneſs of the *Arguments* he offers.

it has been demonſtrated, that the Futurity of all future Events is eſtabliſhed by previous Neceſſity, either natural or moral; ſo 'tis manifeſt, that the ſovereign Creator and Diſpoſer of the World has ordered this Neceſſity, by ordering his own Conduct, either in deſignedly acting, or forbearing to act. For, as the Being of the World is from God, ſo the Circumſtances in which it had it's Being at firſt, both negative and poſitive, muſt be ordered by him, in one of theſe Ways; and all the neceſſary Conſequences of theſe Circumſtances, muſt be ordered by him. And God's active and poſitive Interpoſitions, after the World was created, and the Conſequences of theſe Interpoſitions; alſo every Inſtance of his forbearing to interpoſe, and the ſure Conſequences of this Forbearance, muſt all be determined according to his Pleaſure. And therefore every Event which is the Conſequence of any Thing whatſoever, or that is connected with any foregoing Thing or Circumſtance, either poſitive or negative, as the Ground or Reaſon of its Exiſtence, muſt be ordered of God; either by a deſigned Efficiency and Interpoſition, or a deſigned forbearing to operate or interpoſe. But, as has been proved, all Events whatſoever are neceſſarily connected with ſomething foregoing, either poſitive or negative, which is the Ground of its Exiſtence. It follows therefore, that the whole Series of Events is thus connected with ſomething in the State of Things, either poſitive or negative, which is *original* in the Series; *i. e.* ſomething which is connected with nothing preceding that, but God's own immediate Conduct, either his acting or forbearing to act. From whence it follows, that as God deſignedly orders his own Conduct, and its connected Conſequences, it muſt neceſſarily be, that he deſignedly orders all Things.

The Things which have been ſaid, obviate ſome of the chief Objections of *Arminians* againſt the *Calviniſtic* Doctrine of the *total Depravity and Corruption of Man's Nature*, whereby his Heart is wholly under the Power of Sin, and he is utterly unable, without the Interpoſition of ſovereign Grace, ſavingly to love God, believe in Chriſt, or do any Thing that is truly good and acceptable in God's Sight. For the main Objection againſt this Doctrine is, that it is inconſiſtent with the Freedom of Man's Will, conſiſting in Indifference and ſelf-determining Power; becauſe it ſuppoſes Man to be under a Neceſſity of Sinning, and that God requires Things of him, in order to his avoiding eternal Damnation, which he is unable to do; and that this Doctrine is wholly inconſiſtent with the Sincerity

of

of Counſels, Invitations, &c. Now this Doctrine ſuppoſes *no other Neceſſity* of Sinning, than a moral Neceſſity; which, as has been ſhewn, don't at all excuſe Sin; and ſuppoſes *no other Inability* to obey any Command, or perform any Duty, even the moſt ſpiritual and exalted, but a moral Inability, which, as has been proved, don't excuſe Perſons in the Non-performance of any good Thing, or make 'em not to be the proper Objects of Commands, Counſels and Invitations. And moreover, it has been ſhewn, that there is not, and never can be, either in Exiſtence, or ſo much as in Idea, any ſuch Freedom of Will, conſiſting in Indifference and Self-determination, for the Sake of which, this Doctrine of original Sin is caſt out; and that no ſuch Freedom is neceſſary, in order to the Nature of Sin, and a juſt Deſert of Puniſhment.

The Things which have been obſerved, do alſo take off the main Objections of *Arminians* againſt the Doctrine of *efficacious Grace*; and at the ſame Time, prove the Grace of God in a Sinner's Converſion (if there be any Grace or divine Influence in the Affair) to be *efficacious*, yea, and *irreſiſtible* too, if by irreſiſtible is meant, that which is attended with a moral Neceſſity, which it is impoſſible ſhould ever be violated by any Reſiſtence. The main Objection of *Arminians* againſt this Doctrine is, that it is inconſiſtent with their ſelf-determining Freedom of Will; and that it is repugnant to the Nature of Vertue, that it ſhould be wrought in the Heart by the determining Efficacy and Power of another, inſtead of its being owing to a ſelf-moving Power; that in that Caſe, the Good which is wrought, would not be *our* Vertue, but rather *God*'s Vertue; becauſe it is not the Perſon in whom it is wrought, that is the determining Author of it, but God that wrought it in him.---But the Things which are the Foundation of theſe Objections, have been conſidered; and it has been demonſtrated, that the Liberty of moral Agents does not conſiſt in ſelf-determining Power; and that there is noNeed of any ſuch Liberty, in order to the Nature of Vertue; nor does it at all hinder, but that the State or Act of the Will may be the Vertue of the Subject, though it be not from Self-determination, but the Determination of an extrinſic Cauſe; even ſo as to cauſe the Event to be morally neceſſary to the Subject of it. And as it has been proved, that nothing in the State or Acts of the Will of Man is contingent; but that on the contrary, every Event of this Kind is neceſſary, by a moral Neceſſity; and has alſo been now demonſtrated, that the Doctrine of an

univerſal

univerſal determining Providence, follows from that Doctrine of Neceſſity, which was proved before: And ſo, that God does deciſively, in his Providence, order all the Volitions of moral Agents, either by poſitive Influence or Permiſſion: And it being allowed on all Hands, that what God does in the Affair of Man's vertuous Volitions, whether it be more or leſs, is by ſome poſitive Influence, and not by meer Permiſſion, as in the Affair of a ſinful Volition: If we put theſe Things together, it will follow, that God's Aſſiſtance or Influence, muſt be determining and deciſive, or muſt be attended with a moral Neceſſity of the Event; and ſo, that God gives Vertue, Holineſs and Converſion to Sinners, by an Influence which determines the Effect, in ſuch a Manner, that the Effect will infallibly follow by a moral Neceſſity; which is what *Calviniſts* mean by efficacious and irreſiſtible Grace.

The Things which have been ſaid, do likewiſe anſwer the chief Objections againſt the Doctrine of God's *univerſal* and *abſolute Decree*, and afford infallible Proof of that Doctrine; and of the Doctrine of *abſolute*, *eternal*, *perſonal Election* in particular. The main Objections againſt theſe Doctrines are, that they infer a Neceſſity of the Volitions of moral Agents, and of the future moral State and Acts of Men; and ſo are not conſiſtent with thoſe eternal Rewards and Puniſhments, which are connected with Converſion and Impenitence; nor can be made to agree with the Reaſonableneſs and Sincerity of the Precepts, Calls, Counſels, Warnings and Expoſtulations of the Word of God; or with the various Methods and Means of Grace, which God uſes with Sinners, to bring 'em to Repentance; and the whole of that moral Government, which God exerciſes towards Mankind: And that they infer an Inconſiſtence between the *ſecret* and *revealed Will of God*; and make God the Author of Sin. But all theſe Things have been obviated in the preceeding Diſcourſe. And the certain Truth of theſe Doctrines, concerning God's eternal Purpoſes, will follow from what was juſt now obſerved concerning God's univerſal Providence; how it infallibly follows from what has been proved, that God orders all Events, and the Volitions of moral Agents amongſt others, by ſuch a deciſive Diſpoſal, that the Events are infallibly connected with his Diſpoſal. For if God diſpoſes all Events, ſo that the infallible Exiſtence of the Events is decided by his Providence, then he doubtleſs thus orders and decides Things *knowingly*, and *on Deſign*. God don't do what he does, nor order what he orders, accidentally and unawares; either

without, or *beſide* his Intention. And if there be a foregoing *Deſign* of doing and ordering as he does, this is the ſame with a *Purpoſe* or *Decree*. And as it has been ſhewn, that nothing is new to God, in any Reſpect, but all Things are perfectly and equally in his View from Eternity; hence it will follow, that his Deſigns or Purpoſes are not Things formed anew, founded on any new Views or Appearances, but are all eternal Purpoſes. And as it has been now ſhewn, how the Doctrine of determining efficacious Grace certainly follows from Things proved in the foregoing Diſcourſe; hence will neceſſarily follow the Doctrine of *particular*, *eternal*, *abſolute Election*. For if Men are made true Saints, no otherwiſe than as God makes 'em ſo, and diſtinguiſhes 'em from others, by an efficacious Power and Influence of his, that decides and fixes the Event; and God thus makes ſome Saints, and not others, on Deſign or Purpoſe, and (as has been now obſerved) no Deſigns of God are new; it follows, that God thus diſtinguiſhed from others, all that ever become true Saints, by his eternal Deſign or Decree.--- I might alſo ſhew, how God's certain Foreknowledge muſt ſuppoſe an abſolute Decree, and how ſuch a Decree can be proved to a Demonſtration from it: But that this Diſcourſe mayn't be lengthen'd out too much, that muſt be omitted for the preſent.

From theſe Things it will inevitably follow, that however Chriſt in ſome Senſe may be ſaid to *die for all*, and to redeem all viſible Chriſtians, yea the whole World by his Death; yet there muſt be ſomething *particular* in the Deſign of his Death, with Reſpect to ſuch as He intended ſhould actually be ſaved thereby. As appears by what has been now ſhewn, God has the actual Salvation or Redemption of a certain Number in his proper abſolute Deſign, and of a certain Number only; and therefore ſuch a Deſign only can be proſecuted in any Thing God does, in order to the Salvation of Men. God purſues a proper Deſign of the Salvation of the Elect in giving Chriſt to die, and proſecutes ſuch a Deſign with Reſpect to no other, moſt ſtrictly ſpeaking; for 'tis impoſſible, that God ſhould proſecute any other Deſign than only ſuch as He has: He certainly don't, in the higheſt Propriety and Strictneſs of Speech, purſue a Deſign that He has not.---- And indeed ſuch a Particularity and Limitation of Redemption will as infallibly follow from the Doctrine of God's Foreknowledge, as from that of the Decree. For 'tis as impoſſible, in Strictneſs of Speech, that God ſhould proſecute a Deſign or Aim at a Thing,

Thing, which He at the ſame Time moſt perfectly knows will not be accompliſhed, as that he ſhould uſe Endeavours for that which is beſide his Decree.

By the Things which have been proved, are obviated ſome of the main Objections againſt the Doctrine of the infallible and neceſſary *Perſeverance* of Saints, and ſome of the main Foundations of this Doctrine are eſtabliſhed. The main Prejudices of *Arminians* againſt this Doctrine ſeem to be theſe; they ſuppoſe ſuch a neceſſary, infallible Perſeverance to be repugnant to the Freedom of the Will; that it muſt be owing to Man's own ſelf-determining Power, that he *firſt becomes* vertuous and holy; and ſo in like Manner, it muſt be left a Thing contingent, to be determin'd by the ſame Freedom of Will, whether he will *perſevere* in Vertue and Holineſs; and that otherwiſe his continuing ſtedfaſt in Faith and Obedience would not be his Vertue, or at all Praiſe-worthy and Rewardable; nor could his Perſeverance be properly the Matter of divine Commands, Counſels & Promiſes, nor his Apoſtacy be properly threaten'd, and Men warned againſt it. Whereas we find all theſe Things in Scripture: There we find Stedfaſtneſs and Perſeverance in true Chriſtianity, repreſented as the Vertue of the Saints, ſpoken of as Praiſe-worthy in them, and glorious Rewards promiſed to it; and alſo find, that God makes it the Subject of his Commands, Counſels and Promiſes; and the contrary, of Threatnings and Warnings. But the Foundation of theſe Objections has been removed, in it's being ſhewn that moral Neceſſity and infallible Certainty of Events is not inconſiſtent with theſe Things; and that, as to Freedom of Will lying in the Power of the Will to determine it ſelf, there neither is any ſuch Thing, nor any Need of it, in order to Vertue, Reward, Commands, Counſels, &c.

And as the Doctrines of efficacious Grace and abſolute Election do certainly follow from Things which have been proved in the preceeding Diſcourſe; ſo ſome of the main Foundations of the Doctrine of Perſeverance are thereby eſtabliſhed. If the Beginning of true Faith and Holineſs, and a Man's becoming a true Saint at firſt, don't depend on the ſelf-determining Power of the Will, but on the determining efficacious Grace of God; it may well be argued, that it is ſo alſo with Reſpect to Men's being continued Saints, or perſevering in Faith and Holineſs. The Converſion of a Sinner being not owing to a Man's Self-determination, but to God's Determination, and eternal Election, which is abſo-

lute, and depending on the ſovereign Will of God, and not on the free Will of Man; as is evident from what has been ſaid: And it being very evident from the Scriptures, that the eternal Election which there is of Saints to Faith and Holineſs, is alſo an Election of them to eternal Salvation; hence their Appointment to Salvation muſt alſo be abſolute, and not depending on their contingent, ſelf-determining Will. From all which it follows, that it is abſolutely fix'd in God's Decree, that all true Saints ſhall perſevere to actual eternal Salvation.

But I muſt leave all theſe Things to the Conſideration of the fair and impartial Reader; and when he has maturely weigh'd them, I would propoſe it to his Conſideration, whether many of the firſt Reformers, and others that ſucceeded them, whom God in their Day made the chief Pillars of his Church, and greateſt Inſtruments of their Deliverance from Error and Darkneſs, and of the Support of the Cauſe of Piety among them, have not been injured, in the Contempt with which they have been treated by many late Writers, for their teaching and maintaining ſuch Doctrines as are commonly called *Calviniſtic*. Indeed ſome of theſe new Writers, at the ſame Time that they have repreſented the Doctrines of theſe antient and eminent Divines, as in the higheſt Degree ridiculous, and contrary to common Senſe, in an Oſtentation of a very generous Charity, have allowed that they were honeſt well-meaning Men: Yea, it may be ſome of them, as tho' it were in great Condeſcenſion and Compaſſion to them, have allowed that they did pretty well for the Day which they lived in, and conſidering the great Diſadvantages they laboured under: When at the ſame Time, their Manner of Speaking has naturally and plainly ſuggeſted to the Minds of their Readers, that they were Perſons, who through the Lowneſs of their Genius, and Greatneſs of the Bigotry, with which their Minds were ſhackled, and Thoughts confined, living in the gloomy Caves of Superſtition, fondly embraced, and demurely and zealouſly taught the moſt abſurd, ſilly and monſtrous Opinions, worthy of the greateſt Contempt of Gentlemen poſſeſſed of that noble and generous Freedom of Thought, which happily prevails in this Age of Light and Enquiry. When indeed ſuch is the Caſe, that we might, if ſo diſpoſed, ſpeak as big Words as they, and on far better Grounds. And really all the *Arminians* on Earth might be challenged without Arrogance or Vanity, to make theſe Principles of theirs wherein they mainly differ from their Fathers, whom they ſo much deſpiſe, con-

ſiſtent

ſiſtent with common Senſe ; yea, and perhaps to produce any Doctrine ever embraced by the blindeſt Bigot of the Church of *Rome*, or the moſt ignorant *Muſſulman*, or extravagant Enthuſiaſt, that might be reduced to more, and more demonſtrable Inconſiſtencies, & Repugnancies to common Senſe, and to themſelves ; tho' their Inconſiſtencies indeed may not lie ſo deep, or be ſo artfully vail'd by a deceitful Ambiguity of Words, and an indeterminate Signification of Phraſes.---- I will not deny, that theſe Gentlemen, many of them, are Men of great Abilities, and have been helped to higher Attainments in Philoſophy, than thoſe antient Divines, and have done great Service to the Church of God in ſome Reſpects : But I humbly conceive, that their differing from their Fathers with ſuch magiſterial Aſſurance, in theſe Points in Divinity, muſt be owing to ſome other Cauſe than ſuperiour Wiſdom.

It may alſo be worthy of Conſideration, whether the great Alteration which has been made in the State of Things in our Nation, and ſome other Parts of the Proteſtant World, in this and the paſt Age, by the exploding ſo generally *Calviniſtic* Doctrines, that is ſo often ſpoken of as worthy to be greatly rejoyced in by the Friends of Truth, Learning and Vertue, as an Inſtance of the great Increaſe of Light in the Chriſtian Church ; I ſay, it may be worthy to be conſidered, whether this be indeed a happy Change, owing to any ſuch Cauſe as an Increaſe of true Knowlege and Underſtanding in Things of Religion ; or whether there is not Reaſon to fear, that it may be owing to ſome worſe Cauſe.

And I deſire it may be conſidered, whether the Boldneſs of ſome Writers may not be worthy to be reflected on, who have not ſcrupled to ſay, That if theſe and thoſe Things are true (which yet appear to be the demonſtrable Dictates of Reaſon, as well as the certain Dictates of the Mouth of the moſt High) then God is unjuſt and cruel, and guilty of manifeſt Deceit and double-dealing, and the like. Yea, ſome have gone ſo far, as confidently to aſſert, That if any Book which pretends to be Scripture, teaches ſuch Doctrines, that alone is ſufficient Warrant for Mankind to reject it, as what cannot be the Word of God. Some who have not gone ſo far, have ſaid, That if the Scripture ſeems to teach any ſuch Doctrines, ſo contrary to Reaſon, we are obliged to find out ſome other Interpretation of thoſe Texts, where ſuch Doctrines ſeem to be exhibited. Others expreſs themſelves yet more modeſtly : They expreſs a Tenderneſs and religious Fear, leſt they ſhould receive and teach any Thing that ſhould ſeem to reflect on God's

moral

moral Character, or be a Diſparagement to his Methods of Adminiſtration, in his moral Government; and therefore expreſs themſelves as not daring to embrace ſome Doctrines, though they ſeem to be delivered in Scripture, according to the more obvious and natural Conſtruction of the Words. But indeed it would ſhew a truer Modeſty and Humility, if they would more entirely rely on God's Wiſdom and Diſcerning, who knows infinitely better than we, what is agreable to his own Perfections, and never intended to leave theſe Matters to the Deciſion of the Wiſdom and Diſcerning of Men; but by his own unerring Inſtruction, to determine for us what the Truth is; knowing how little our Judgment is to be depended on, and how extremely prone, vain and blind Men are, to err in ſuch Matters.

The Truth of the Caſe is, that if the Scripture plainly taught the oppoſite Doctrines, to thoſe that are ſo much ſtumbled at, *viz.* the *Arminian* Doctrine of Free-Will, and others depending thereon, it would be the greateſt of all Difficulties that attend the Scriptures, incomparably greater than its containing any, even the moſt myſterious of thoſe Doctrines of the firſt Reformers, which our late Free-thinkers have ſo ſuperciliouſly exploded.--- Indeed it is a glorious Argument of the Divinity of the holy Scriptures, that they teach ſuch Doctrines, which in one Age and another, thro' the Blindneſs of Men's Minds, and ſtrong Prejudices of their Hearts, are rejected, as moſt abſurd and unreaſonable, by the wiſe and great Men of the World; which yet, when they are moſt carefully and ſtrictly examined, appear to be exactly agreable to the moſt demonſtrable, certain, and natural Dictates of Reaſon. By ſuch Things it appears, that the *Fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than Men*, and God does as is ſaid in 1 Cor. i. 19, 20. *For it is written, I will deſtroy the Wiſdom of the Wiſe; I will bring to nothing the Underſtanding of the Prudent. Where is the Wiſe! Where is the Scribe! Where is the Diſputer of this World! Hath not God made fooliſh the Wiſdom of this World?* And as it uſed to be in Time paſt, ſo it is probable it will be in Time to come, as it is there written, in ver. 27, 28, 29. *But God hath choſen the fooliſh Things of the World, to confound the Wiſe: And God hath choſen the weak Things of the World, to confound the Things that are mighty: And baſe Things of the World, and Things which are deſpiſed, hath God choſen: Yea, and Things which are not, to bring to nought Things that are; that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence.* AMEN.

FINIS.

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[N. B. The Capital *P.* signifies the *Part*; this Mark, §, the *Section*; *Concl.* the *Concluſion*; and the ſmall *p.* the *Page*; where the Things here ſpecified, are to be found.]

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